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ABSTRACT

This final report is the second of three reports (Preliminary, Final, and Summary) of the findings of the 1988 Provincial Writing Assessment in Manitoba, Canada for grades 4, 8, and 11 of French Immersion schools. It contains an overview of the purposes, procedures, and a detailed presentation of the findings and recommendations of the Writing Assessment 1988. The report's seven chapters are as follows: (1) Introduction (discussing English language arts curriculum in French Immersion schools); (2) Purposes and Procedures of the Test; (3) Grade 4 Results; (4) Grade 8 Results; (5) Grade 11 Results; (6) Teacher Questionnaire; and (7) Findings and Recommendations. The report is one of a series of reports on writing assessment in regular English, French Immersion, and Franco-Manitoban programs. Two bibliographies totaling 21 items are included. An appendix containing the results of teacher surveys at all grade levels is attached. (SR)

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MANITOBA WRITING ASSESSMENT 1988

FINAL REPORT

FRENCH IMMERSION SCHOOLS

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Manitoba
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MANITOBA

WRITING

ASSESSMENT

1988

FINAL REPORT

French Immersion Schools

A REPORT OF THE
CURRICULUM SERVICES BRANCH
MANITOBA EDUCATION AND TRAINING

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PREFACE

This Final Report is the second of three reports of the findings of the 1988 Writing Assessment for grades 4, 8, and 11 of French Immersion schools. It contains a description of the study along with conclusions and recommendations based not only upon teacher opinions but also upon the judgement of the Technical Advisory Committee. Members of the Committee reviewed the data and interpreted it in the light of their considerable knowledge and experience. Teachers and school administrators are encouraged to review the recommendations for applicability to their own programs.

There are two other series of reports in this assessment. They are the three Preliminary Reports which present the actual data and the Summary Report which presents an overview of the results along with the main conclusions and recommendations.

The Preliminary Reports were distributed to all schools in the province as well as to school division offices, to teacher and trustee associations, to libraries, and to the universities. The Summary Report will receive the same distribution as the Preliminary Reports, while the more extensive Final Report will only be distributed to school division offices, teacher and trustee organizations, libraries, and universities. Additional copies of this Final Report, however, can be obtained from Manitoba Education and Training on request.

Students in regular English, French Immersion, and Franco-Manitoba programs were tested and reported on separately. There is a complete series of reports (Preliminary, Final, and Summary) available for each of these three populations.

Acknowledgements

This assessment would not have been possible without the assistance and co-operation of people too numerous to mention: the students who wrote the tests; teachers who administered the tests; those who assisted us with the pilot testing; and teachers who took the time to complete questionnaires. Special mention, however, must be made of a number of groups and individuals:

- Lucille Maurice who wrote this report.
- The members of the Joint Committee on Evaluation who provided guidance throughout the project.
- The following members of the Technical Advisory Committee who aided with the analysis and interpretation of results: Thérèse Blanc, Dorothy Trudel, Gestny Ewart, Pat Vandel, Ed Mann, Lois Quenel, Valérie Allard, Roger Landry, and John Lovelace.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

The Population

This report summarizes the 1988 English Writing Assessment results of the grades 4, 8, 11 students in Immersion schools in Manitoba. These students are assessed separately from English and Français students with no intent of comparisons in the results.

In the case of the grade 4 students, the papers were evaluated by markers who had been trained on samples drawn from Immersion schools and whose expectations reflected the concerns for the constraints inherent in the English Language Arts curriculum in Immersion schools at that level. The grade 8 and 11 students had their papers assessed by the same group of provincial raters who marked the grade 8 and 11 papers of students in the regular English program.

A Statement About the English Language Arts Curriculum in Immersion Schools

The programme of studies as implemented in Immersion schools in the Province of Manitoba by the Bureau de l'éducation française (BEF) stipulates that the teaching of English, including formal reading and writing, shall begin in grade one. A teaching time allotment of 25% of the school day is assigned for the teaching of English for all grades. In the remaining time (75%), the students learn French through the study of the different subject areas. In kindergarten, grades one and two, most of that time is devoted to developing the students' listening and oral language skills in French. The introduction of formal reading and writing in French follows this development of the oral skills in the second language. That is to say, the Bureau de l'éducation français recommends that English beginning readers in Immersion schools learn to read and write in their first language before being introduced to these more formal skills in French.

This policy regarding the sequencing of reading instruction is not prevalent across Canada where French in an Immersion setting is being taught. However, in order to be consistent with the vast body of knowledge that has come to the educational milieu through recent studies on how language is acquired and how reading is learned, this sequencing of reading instruction appears to be the most logical for optimal learning in both languages.

Contrary to research about Immersion which suggests that the opportune time to introduce English reading is in grade 3 or thereabouts, well after the French reading skills are in place (and this in order to reduce interference in reading skills), the Bureau de l'éducation français finds support for its recommendations in the modern theories of what the reading process involves and based on the results that have come from reading in second language research done in many countries. These studies have carried the bulk of reading research much beyond the confines of local conditions allowing for a broader conceptualization of the impact of beginning to read and write in a second language. The philosophy of the English Language Arts curriculum for Immersion schools pertaining to beginning reading and writing when a second language is involved, rests on insights gained in the psycholinguistic processes of learning to read and write through comparative reading investigations.

These studies postulate:

- that a frequent cause of reading problems is the use of a different language of instruction from the child's mother tongue when formal reading is first introduced. (Downing, 1976)
- that an understanding of the purposes of literacy allows for better progress in learning to read and write in the early years. Literacy in this case is being used in its broadest sense to mean the total body of skills needed for an effective communication in any medium. (p.65 Middle Years Program of Studies)
- that this understanding is best developed through frequent communicative activities in listening and speaking, and meaningful reading and writing experiences carried on in the first language during the first years of schooling. (Clay, 1976)
- that a child's understanding of linguistic concepts involved in literacy acquisition appears to be just as important as his/her understanding mathematical concepts in acquiring numeracy. This points to the great importance of cognitive clarity in learning to read and write. Cognitive clarity, which is an understanding that printed text is a form of language, that it has a communicative quality, and that features of spoken language are represented by written signs, is an essential part of learning to read and write and implies that the child's understanding of the task at hand should not be inhibited by a linguistic mismatch. (Downing, 1976)

This belief in the need for appropriate sequencing of reading and writing in both languages in Immersion schools has generated a whole body of hypotheses relative to the educational treatment most suitable to the teaching of languages in this setting, and a concern for the necessity of Language Arts curricula (both English and French) designed to foster and abet the goals of the total curriculum of Immersion schools which are to make English students functionally bilingual by the end of grade 12.

These curricula found their basis in the following assumptions:

- that many children come to school with oracy skills well developed in their first language. Since, according to Smith and Goodman, much of the ability to read and make sense of print comes from the semantic, syntactic and grapho-phonic predictions a reader makes and from previous experiences that can be verbalized, then oral skills, well in place, are a prerequisite to success in reading. Assuming that we accept the psycholinguistic view of reading as being an interaction between the thoughts and language of the reader and the thoughts and language of the author and of writing as the expression of a meaningful set of ideas, then it should be deemed essential to make provisions for increasing the listening vocabulary of the student's second language and for developing her/his oral competency in that language before introducing formal reading and writing in grade 2. If the process of reading is facilitated by familiarity, would it not be easier to learn to read in the language in which the reader is most fluent?

- that many students come to school already being able to read some English words. They are eager and interested in learning to read in their first language so this would be the ideal moment to introduce them to the abstract process of reading.

- that as Language Arts teachers we are aware of the importance of children's literature in the development of language ability. It has been shown (Chomsky, 1968) that there is a high correlation between the linguistic stages of children and their exposure to literature. It is the school's responsibility to intensify and extend the literary experience of the students, tailoring the program to fit their pre-school experience. Exposing children to literature in their own language from the beginning of school is essential.

- that the student's ability for learning to read and write in the second language will be enhanced in view of the fact that he/she will have developed meta-linguistic awareness of his first language. Meta-linguistic awareness is the ability to reflect and talk about language; specifically, language awareness develops when a speaker or listener begins to consciously think about the language being used.

- that thought processes and concepts that have been developed initially through significant experiences and problem-solving activities in the first language, will foster and support learning of the same in the second language and, in turn, will be strengthened by their use in the second language.

- that transfers of learning occur when learning a second language. Transfers of learning refer to processes which are basic to learning and that once learned can be applied to any or almost any language. Because of the high degree of similarity in many areas between English and French, it is possible to transfer many of the skills from one language to the other quite readily. Thought processes, (e.g., classification, sequencing, problem-solving), concepts of time, position, etc., and meta-linguistic awareness, all of which are non-language specific, fall in that category. In other areas a concept will be a transfer but the application in many cases will not (e.g., punctuation). However, teachers must not assume that transfers of skills and concepts have taken place even if these concepts and skills have been taught in the other language. Whereas students may transfer a skill from one language to another, it does not follow that they will do so automatically. Teachers must provide opportunities which will increase the students' awareness of the phenomena and facilitate and reinforce transfer of learning from one language to another.

- that interferences (or negative transfers) occur when learning a second language. Interference is the tendency to impose phonological, syntactical and semantic systems of one's language on the second language being learned. Because readers and writers in Immersion schools may make errors due to negative transfer (interference from one language with the other), a competent teacher must be aware of the interference in order to eliminate confusion for the students or to diagnose specific areas of difficulty. Such errors would be present in spelling patterns, word order in sentences, misuse of prepositions, etc.

- that in the learning of a second language in an Immersion setting, the advantages gained from capitalizing on transfers of cognition and language originating from the first language may far outweigh, in benefits to the language learner, the negative effects of interferences arising from the second language. This premise should influence the decision relative to the sequencing of formal reading.

- that it is necessary for the teacher to be conscious of the fact that the reading/writing process in English is identical to the reading/writing process in French. Teaching strategies that are effective in one language are effective in the other.

- that Language Arts teachers (both English and French) must possess a sound knowledge of how children acquire literacy and how language and thought processes evolve. They must also be good diagnosticians in order to gear instruction to the levels and needs of students and to avoid redundant exercises in skills students already possess or do not need.

- that the Language Arts curriculum in its conception must reflect an acknowledgement of the time constraints placed upon the English Language Arts program and of transfers which take place between the two languages and compensate for this constraint in the early years.

- that given the proper educational treatment, the student in French Immersion will not experience greater or different learning difficulties than he/she would in an English program and that achievement in the first language will not be adversely affected by the second language.

Some of these assumptions about second language learning in an Immersion setting have been supported by research done in Immersion programs across Canada. Others, namely those having to do with the sequencing of the instruction in reading and writing when two languages are involved as they apply to the Language Arts curriculum in Immersion schools in Manitoba, have never been tested. This provincial writing assessment provides an opportunity to verify if an English Language Arts curriculum based on these assumptions produces satisfactory levels of performance in writing, for the Immersion students.

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CHAPTER 2

Purposes and Procedures of the Test

The Final Report of the 1988 Provincial Writing Assessment contains an overview of the purposes and procedures, and a detailed presentation of the findings and recommendations of the Writing Assessment 1988.

Purpose

The 1988 Writing Assessment was designed primarily to supply data on the writing competence of students, to survey a broad range of skills and to produce a descriptive rather than an evaluative picture of school writing in Manitoba. Its intention was to obtain estimates of group performance, not to grade individual students or schools.

Its purpose was threefold:

(i) to describe the state of school writing (with no intent of comparison);

(ii) to monitor curriculum development (see Chapter 1); and

(iii) to provide a basis for recommendations that would assist the process of curriculum improvement locally and provincially.

The data obtained on the writing tests were supplemented by further information gained from the comments of markers and from responses to a teachers' questionnaire about the content and methods of instruction.

Construction and Scoring

Grades 4, 8, and 11 were chosen for assessment because writing in these three grades is indicative of the unfolding of writing development that one might expect in the primary, middle, and senior years. Specific recommendations will be made and directions indicated for each of these levels of schooling according to the findings of this assessment.

In September, 1987 a Technical Advisory Committee was struck to determine the aspects of writing which were to be tested, and to decide upon the scoring process and the analysis of data. The Committee consisted of teachers drawn from different parts of the Province (urban, rural, and Northern) and representative of the three grades to be tested.

The Committee reviewed and selected the forms of writing for the test appropriate to each of the three grade levels. It established, by consensus, the levels of expected performance. It decided upon an holistic evaluation of the written products. For the purpose of describing student performance more precisely, it was thought necessary to specify competence in terms of those aspects of writing common to all prose. These aspects, ideas, structure, style and mechanics, were adapted and arranged as nine qualities essential to school writing. Each quality was defined and the expected performance described on a six-point scale.

Furthermore, the committee decided upon a coherent approach for evaluating the written products of the test. This approach had to be consistent with the integrated and developmental nature of the English Language Arts program, for Immersion schools.

To achieve consistency with the program, the evaluation procedures used on the test would have to be applicable to all grades. The procedures would have to take into account the various contexts and purposes in which writing is used in schools. Finally, it would have to encourage markers to look beyond the surface features of writing and observe how students cope with meaning and increasing levels of abstraction.

The elements or aspects decided upon for purposes of the writing test were: Organization and Sequence, Wording/Style, Focus or Theme, Ideas, Choice of Detail and Elaboration of Ideas, Sentence Structure, Usage, Punctuation and Capitalization, and Spelling.

A further consideration in constructing the test was the need, within the limits of the test, to mirror procedures recommended in the English Language Arts program for developing writing skills. These procedures provided for such pre- and post-writing activities as peer discussion, rough drafts, editing, revising, and re-writing.

Writing Tasks

The Technical Advisory Committee decided that two written tasks appropriate to age and grade would be chosen for each grade.

Separate spelling tests would be administered to grades 8 and 11.

In grade 4 the two tasks were Story Writing and Report Writing. In the first task students had to construct a story around the finding of a box on the way to school. The second task, Report Writing, required them to write a report on an animal. The report was based on research done previously.

In grade 8 the test consisted of two tasks and a spelling test of 24 words. The first assignment, Persuasive Writing, required students to take and maintain a position for or against one of six statements. The second task, Narrative Writing, required them to write a story set in one of four different time periods.

Grade 11 students were assigned two writing tasks and a spelling test of twenty words. The first task, Process Writing, required students to explain how something was done or organized. The second assignment, Essay Writing, asked students to respond to a newspaper article by writing a personal opinion essay.

Pilot tests were conducted in several schools.

Marking Procedures

The same marking procedures were followed at each grade level.

The written products were marked holistically and evaluated on two types of scales: a General Impression Marking Scale and nine Analytic Scales.

Each student paper was assigned ten different scores.

A General Impression Marking Scale (G.I.M.) provided a single score for each piece of writing, while the Analytic Marking Scales provided nine scores, one for each important aspect of writing identified for evaluation. These aspects or elements are: Organization and Sequence, Word Choice, Focus or Theme, Choice of Detail or Elaboration, Sentence Structure, Usage, Ideas, Punctuation and Capitals, and Spelling.

The General Impression Marking Scale (G.I.M.)

General Impression Marking provides a single impressionistic score awarded by markers who have been carefully trained and practiced to assure reliability.

After the first reading, the markers decide where the paper fits within a range of test papers ordered from the best paper to the poorest according to scales and scores indicated below:

5 or 6 - High
3 or 4 - Middle
1 or 2 - Low
0 - Insufficient Material

The markers focus their attention on the message as a whole. No particular quality or detailed feature such as spelling or syntax, is allowed to constitute the whole score. The markers are concerned with more general or global criteria such as the quality of thought, the overall shaping of the presentation, and the general control of language evident in the writing. They take into account the requirements of the assignment, the maturity of the students, and the expected levels of performance for the grade.

If the scores of the two markers did not differ by more than one point, the two scores were added together to give the final G.I.M. score.

If the scores of the two markers did differ by more than one point, the paper was read for a third time by an adjudicator. In adjudicated cases, the final G.I.M. score was obtained by applying the following rules:

(i) If the adjudicator's rating was midway between the two ratings, then the adjudicator's score was added to the average of the first two scores.

(ii) Otherwise, the adjudicator's score was added to the closer of the two scores.

The two scores of the markers were combined to obtain a final G.I.M. score of 0 to 12.

Analytic Marking Scales

Analytic Marking Scales were used to assess the nine qualities or aspects considered essential to school writing. These qualities are Organization and Sequence, Word Choice, Focus or Theme, Ideas, Choice of Detail and Elaboration, Sentence Structure, Usage, Punctuation and Capitals, and Spelling.

The holistic nature of the marking allowed the markers to maintain a focus on the central meaning of the written product while observing the way the parts related to one another; thus they are able to rate the different aspects of writing. The student's writing is seen as the result of a continuous process of choice among organizational and stylistic options made during the three stages of writing. By comparing first and final drafts, markers are able to observe at which writing stage the fine-tuning to audience and purpose occurred.

The markers were all experienced teachers who were carefully trained in these forms of holistic marking. Their knowledge of the classroom enabled the assessment to present a picture of current practice and a valid normative measure of student writing performance.

The Teacher Questionnaire

The Teacher Questionnaire was undertaken to obtain more information about the processes and strategies used in Manitoba schools to generate writing.

Information of the following aspects and activities was requested:-

(i) the frequency and nature of pre-writing and post-writing activities;
(ii) the sources for generating topics;
(iii) the different purposes for writing;
(iv) the different audiences addressed;
(v) the use of conferencing;
(vi) provisions for sharing of the written products;
(vii) the use of folders; and
(viii) writing across the curriculum.

Results

The results for grades 4, 8 and 11 are reported separately for each grade level.

The method of reporting for each grade will include:

(i) An outline of the writing test for each grade;
(ii) The General Impression Marking Scale and the Analytic Scale scores presented in tabular form;
(iii) A review of some of the main points of writing growth which are reflected in the General Impression Marking scores;
(iv) The criteria that determined the evaluation of the nine essential qualities of writing;
(v) An Interpretation of the results; and
(vi) A summary of the results and of the interpretation of these results for each grade.

For all three levels, the tables giving the results are presented in four columns - low, middle, high, mean. Each of the first three columns represent the percentage of students scoring in these areas, i.e.,

high - 5 - 6
middle - 3 - 4
low - 1 - 2.

The mean for the GIM represents a score on 12, while the mean for the other qualities represents a score on 6.

In order to be able to pass a judgment on the quality of performance represented by the results, after discussion, the members of the Technical Advisory Committee arrived at a consensus that the results of the tables would be analyzed according to the following scale:

using the combined results of the middle and high ranges, a percentage of

- 85% and above indicates a strength
- 80% - 85% indicates satisfactory achievement
- 80% and less indicates a need for improvement

e.g., Usage (Grade 4 Story Writing)
middle/high 82.2% + 7.7% = 89.9% (indicates a strength).

Markers' Comments

The markers' comments, collected at the time of scoring, proved to be an invaluable help in forming judgments, and, wherever possible, were incorporated in the interpretations.

CHAPTER 3

Grade 4 Results

In the grade 4 test two written products, Story Writing and Report Writing, were assessed.

In the first task, Story Writing, students were presented with a starting idea: **"As I left home one morning for school I found a box"**.

Following a ten-minute discussion in groups, students wrote a rough draft. The following day, they revised, edited, and re-wrote their stories.

Prior to the second task, Report Writing, students were encouraged to do research on an animal of their choice. The writing assignment required them to prepare a report for someone who knew nothing about the animal. The report was to include information about appearance, habitat, eating habits, and unusual or interesting features.

Both pieces of writing were marked, first, on a General Impressing Marking Scale and then marked according to nine Analytic Marking Scales by carefully trained markers who were also experienced Immersion teachers at grade 4 level.

STORY WRITING

	Low	Middle	High	Mean
GIM	13.9%	73.6%	12.5%	6.33
1. Organization and Sequence	32.2	61.5	6.3	3.00
2. Wording and Style	31.2	62.1	6.7	2.98
3. Focus or Theme	29.3	63.5	7.2	3.03
4. Ideas	32.2	57.2	9.6	3.00
5. Detail/Elaboration	38.0	52.9	9.1	2.95
6. Sentence Structure	25.5	65.4	9.1	3.12
7. Usage	10.1	82.2	7.7	3.36
8. Punctuation/Capitals	24.0	65.4	10.6	3.16
9. Spelling	23.1	70.2	6.7	3.15

REPORT WRITING

	Low	Middle	High	Mean
GIM	20.7%	68.7%	10.6%	5.98
1. Organization and Sequence	33.2	61.0	5.8	2.89
2. Wording and Style	34.6	59.1	6.3	2.94
3. Focus or Theme	26.0	66.3	7.7	3.09
4. Ideas	28.4	62.5	9.1	3.06
5. Detail/Elaboration	30.3	59.6	10.1	3.04
6. Sentence Structure	23.6	68.2	8.2	3.15
7. Usage	7.7	75.0	17.3	3.62
8. Punctuation/Capitals	9.6	65.4	25.0	3.72
9. Spelling	16.8	69.3	13.9	3.37

NOTE: Number of students tested = 210

General Impression Marking

The GIM Scale attempts to rate compositions in a general global manner. Areas covered include the quality of thought evident in the paper, the effectiveness of the overall presentation, and the effectiveness of style and word choice. Both tasks, story writing and report writing, were rated twice on a scale of 0 - 6 by two different markers. The two scores were then combined for a score on 12.

Samples scoring in the high range demonstrated the following qualities:

High (5-6)

In this range, in story writing the paper has evidence of sound thinking on the part of the writer, that is, above what would be normally expected at this grade level. The quality of thought reflects a developmentally mature point of view. The paper is not overly egocentric or narrow in perspective. The organization of the paper indicates careful planning, with an idea or event following logically from the preceding one. The paper is presented in an effective fashion, and it follows the organization such that the reader has no difficulty in following the sequence of ideas or events of these words. The style is appropriate to the level of thought and word choice and use of these words reflect a grasp of language that is above average. The level of the paper is appropriate for the audience being addressed and fulfills the stated purpose.

For report writing, the reader would expect to find a wealth of information on the chosen topic. Paragraphing should be used effectively as an organizational tool and the use of descriptive words should be above average. The writer must be able to write opening and closing paragraphs that are effective. The usage must be appropriate to the level of presentation, and spelling attracts little or no attention.

Samples scoring in the middle range demonstrated the following characteristics:

Middle (3-4)

In the middle range the paper had evidence of thinking on the part of the writer that is appropriate to the grade level of the student. The quality of thought reflects what would be expected at this age. In the case of story writing, although the paper is essentially egocentric in perspective, this does not interfere with the overall movement and organization of the paper. The paper is obviously planned though at times the writer may wander from the central thrust. The ideas or events are generally sequenced in a meaningful fashion: the style is generally clear and word choice and use reflect a grasp of language that would be expected at this grade level. The level of the paper may not, for the most part, take into account the audience being addressed, but, in general, it fulfills the purpose of the paper.

In the case of report writing, a paper in this range would have evidence of a quantity of information on the chosen topic, although, it is expected details may not be as abundant or as specific to the particular animal as in the high range. Paragraphing should be used as an organizational tool even if not always correctly used. Sentences should be well constructed but may lack variety, and spelling and usage should be acceptable for this grade level.

Samples that scored in the low range had evidence of the following characteristics:

Low (1-2)

For this category, the quality of thought evident in story writing is obviously immature and below what is expected at grade level. The point of view is egocentric to the point that it interferes with the relating of ideas and events. The organization in the paper is difficult to follow and does not reflect any careful planning. Ideas and events do not follow each other logically or sequentially. The movement of the paper is interrupted by wandering thoughts and events or inappropriate information. The style is inconsistent and immature, with many repetitions. Word choice is unclear, inappropriate, and distracting. The writer seems to have no awareness of the audience or reader and seems to have no purpose in writing the paper.

A report in this range would reveal minimal knowledge of the subject, with few details. No attempt is made to catch the reader's attention in the opening, and there is no feeling of ending or closure. The vocabulary is limited, colourless, and does not aid description. Ideas are not presented in a logical or in an interesting way. Spelling and usage detract from the readability and general expression of the paper.

Results

Story Writing

High	(9-12)	12.5%
Middle	(5-8)	73.6%
Low	(0-4)	13.9%
Mean		6.33

Report Writing

High	(9-12)	10.6%
Middle	(5-8)	68.7%
Low	(0-4)	20.7%
Mean		5.98

Results from the GIM indicate that in story writing 86.1% of the students performed in the middle and high range while in report writing 79.3% attained the same performance. These results show an acceptable percentage of the grade 4 Immersion students who present a paper, either in report or story writing, where the quality of thought is appropriate for the grade level and in some cases above what would be expected at this grade level. In all aspects of organization and presentation, these papers demonstrated performance that was acceptable for a grade 4 Immersion student.

In attempting to explain, however, why students performed slightly better in story writing than in report writing, it was felt that the answer may rest in the different genres of writing involved in both tasks and the diverse demands placed on the writer. In grade 4 many students are still at the egocentric stage of their psychological development and find it difficult to be objective in a report and are inclined to include unrelated information and details or interject personal opinions.

STORY WRITING - GRADE 4

1. ORGANIZATION AND SEQUENCE

Generally the organization should follow a sequence of events. The paper should effectively introduce the situation in general, lead the reader clearly through the sequence of events, and come to closure. The writer should introduce the setting and characters and build from this introduction. The introduction and conclusion should aid the reader in understanding the series of events.

HIGH (5 OR 6)

- effective opening that catches the reader's interest
- clearly follows a sequence of events
- effective transitions from one event to another
- effective closing
- understandable conclusion

MIDDLE (3 OR 4)

- generally introduces the story
- does not capture the reader's interest
- has no necessary background or explanation of the story
- events are appropriately described, but not clearly laid out
- may not have used effective transitions
- may have a weak ending
- little or no sense of closure

LOW (1 OR 2)

- opening does not catch the interest of the reader
- necessary background is lacking
- sequence of events is confusing, left out, or inappropriately ordered
- no transition phrases
- reader is left with little or no feeling of closure or completeness
- story may leave the reader confused about what really happened
- confusion about the importance of events or the characters

Results

6.3% of the students scored in the high range (5-6)
61.5% scored in the middle range (3-4)
32.2% scored in the low range (0-2) with a mean of 3.00

Sixty-seven point eight percent (67.8%) of the students scored in the high and middle ranges. These results indicate that this is an area in students' writing that needs improvement.

Interpretation

This area is generally weak as fully one-third (32.2%) of those tested performed at the low level. In the middle range, the students had some idea of beginning, middle, and end. Many of the opening sentences, although introducing the story adequately were not effective in catching the interest of the reader. In many cases the events were appropriately described but the sequence of events was confusing or inappropriately ordered with little use of effective transitions. Necessary background information was often lacking. There were a few good surprise endings, but very often the conclusion left the reader with little or no feeling of closure or completeness. Nevertheless, a reference to the table pertaining to organization and sequence in the Preliminary Report (p.4) indicates that another 27.1% of the students performed in the high-low or 2 range on a possible score of 6 which suggests that many grade 4 writers have some sense of organization even if it is underdeveloped.

2. WORDING AND STYLE

Word choice refers to the choice of vocabulary the writer makes in writing the story and how the writer strings those words together into phrases, sentences, or longer thought-units. Word choice needs to reflect both precision and maturity, as well as appropriateness to the audience being addressed. The writer should be aware of the level of the audience and explain words used in a highly specific or technical manner. The words and the ways in which they are strung together should be clearly understandable.

HIGH (5 OR 6)

- reflects sensitivity to the audience
- words are precise and exact
- interesting style
- unusual or interesting words are used appropriately
- words help the reader clearly see and understand the story

MIDDLE (3 OR 4)

- words have appropriate referent do not reflect a sensitivity to reader
- vocabulary is too general though correctly used

LOW (1 OR 2)

- words do not aid the reader in understanding the story and may interfere with comprehension
- words are colourless, non-engaging, uninteresting

Results

6.7% of the students scored in the high range (5-6)
62.1% scored in the middle range (3-4)
31.2% scored in the low range (0-2) with a mean of 2.98

Sixty-eight point eight percent (68.8%) of the students scored in the high and middle ranges. These results indicate that student performance in this area needs improvement.

Interpretation

Except in a few rare cases, choice of vocabulary was weak. This was a narrative piece of writing requiring word choice reflecting both precision and maturity. In the middle range, although oftentimes words were correctly used, much of the vocabulary was too general in nature for this type of writing. There was an overuse of non-specific words such as "interesting", "good" and very few synonyms were present. In the low range, words and style seemed colourless, non-engaging, and uninteresting.

3. FOCUS OR THEME

The writer chooses aspects, incidents, and details because they relate to the purpose of writing. She/he seems to have a central focus and maintains that throughout the piece. There seems to be a theme holding each of the story's elements together.

HIGH (5 OR 6)

- central focus for the story
- develops elements so they directly relate to the central focus
- story focus is clearly discernible
- events have been sufficiently covered at the conclusion
- no unrelated details are included

MIDDLE (3 OR 4)

- central focus exists but elements are not clearly related to focus
- the purpose is not clearly identifiable
- at times, the writer interjects information, opinions, or details unrelated to the central focus
- intrusions do not seriously interfere with the thrust or movement
- at the conclusion, the reader feels as if the events have been covered but that the movement of the story has been interrupted

LOW (1 OR 2)

- story has no central focus or thematic movement
- unrelated information, opinions, and details seem to be added
- at the conclusion, the reader is likely to question the main point or purpose of the story

Results

7.2% of the students were in high range (5-6)
63.5% were in the middle range (3-4)
29.3% were in the low range (0-2), with a mean of 3.03

Seventy point seven percent of students scored in the high and middle ranges. These results show a need for improvement in this area.

Interpretation

Seventy point seven percent (70.7%) of the papers read were in the medium to high range where the focus or theme was concerned. In this area, several weaknesses were noted. At times the writer would interject information, opinions, or details unrelated to the central theme with little concern as to how they related to the flow of events. However, many times this did not seriously interfere with the thrust of the story. It was also noted that quite a few story writers interrupted the flow of their story and got lost in their fantasy either unconsciously or because they wanted to add to the length of their story.

4. IDEAS

In the story, the basic idea was given. It was "**As I left home one morning for school I found a box.**

The ideas presented reflect quality, uniqueness and creativity of the thinking involved in the development of the story.

HIGH (5 OR 6)

- appropriate and meaningful ideas
- dealt with the topic in a unique, creative fashion
- humour, interesting figures of speech or the like are used
- interesting point of view

MIDDLE (3 OR 4)

- generally sound
- does not reflect a unique or creative point of view
- no attempt has been made to employ humour, interesting figures of speech, or comparisons

LOW (1 OR 2)

- ideas do not reflect sound or creative thinking
- story is lifeless - ideas do not congeal as a whole
- writing reflects mental wandering rather than logical or creative thinking

Results

9.6% of the students were in high range (5-6)
57.2% were in the middle range (3-4)
33.2% were in the low range (0-2) with a mean of 3.00

Sixty-six point eight percent (66.8%) of the students scored in the middle and high ranges. These results indicate a need for improvement in this area.

Interpretation

This is an area where a weakness is evident as one-third of the students (33.2%) fall in the low range having failed to present the idea in a manner reflecting sound or creative thinking. However, a reference to the Preliminary Report (p.5) indicates that 27.1% of these students have scored a 2 on a possible score of 6 on this characteristic which seems to suggest that many of these writers have some sense of what makes an engaging story but would need more help in developing unique or creative points of view. One noted that TV influence was very evident and much modelling after book characters was done. There was little attempt at humour or figures of speech and when idiomatic phrases were present many were misused, and the meaning was not fully understood. In the high range, there were students who were able to deal with this topic in an appropriate, meaningful, creative fashion.

5. CHOICE OF DETAILS AND ELABORATION OF IDEAS

The details chosen by a writer, how particular ideas within a story have been elaborated, and how real and vivid the writing is can make the difference between a listless, lifeless paper and an exciting, engaging paper.

HIGH (5 OR 6)

- details are appropriate to the telling of the story
- story is elaborated and interesting to the reader without getting carried away
- words, phrases, imagery, and figures of speech make the events real and clear to the reader

MIDDLE (3 OR 4)

- details chosen seem appropriate but the story, at times, seems to lack life
- elaboration may not be clear to the reader
- story is adequately described

LOW (1 OR 2)

- details do not seem appropriate to the purpose of the story
- writer has not appropriately elaborated the story and the writing is lifeless

Results

9.1% of the students were in the high range (5-6)
52.9% were in the middle range (3-4)
38.0% were in the low range (0-2) with a mean of 2.95

Sixty-two percent (62.0%) of the students placed in the middle and high ranges. These results indicate a weakness in this area and a need for improvement.

Interpretation

This characteristic presents the most difficulty for these students with only 62.0% placing in the middle and high range and 38.0% in the low. In the middle and low ranges, many of the papers were listless and lifeless rather than interesting to the reader. Although the details chosen were in many cases appropriate to the story, often the writing seemed to lack voice. The lack of details did not allow the reader to visualize the process or events adequately, and the absence of imagery and meaningful vocabulary did not allow the writing to come to life. However, of the 38.0% of the students in the low range, 31% obtained a score of 2 which implies that appropriate pre-writing activities would greatly enhance the abilities of all students in this area.

6. SENTENCE STRUCTURE

No hard and fast rules can be set down for sentence structure. At times, a variety of sentence structures is appropriate to create and maintain reader interest. Sometimes repetitive patterns can create a desired effect. Sometimes, short, choppy sentences are appropriate to the topic and discourse; at other times, long, elegant structures are appropriate.

HIGH (5 OR 6)

- positive effect is created in the use of sentence structures
- writer has control of a variety of structures and employs them effectively

MIDDLE (3 OR 4)

- writer has control of a number of sentence structures but at times the structures are ambiguous or clumsy

LOW (1 OR 2)

- little more than simple sentences
- a small number of structures are repeated
- paper is boring or predictable
- writer has serious difficulties in presenting effectively constructed sentences

Results

9.1% of the students were in the high range (5-6)
65.4% were in the middle range (3-4)
25.5% were in the low range (0-2) with a mean of 3.12

Seventy-four point five percent (74.5%) of the students scored in the middle and high range. These results indicate a need for improvement in this area.

Interpretation

In this area, 74.5% of the students placed in the middle and high range with 25.5% obtaining a score of 2 or a 1 (on a possible score of 6). This indicates that many of the writers (high-middle range) have control of a variety of sentence structures and employ them effectively. However, it was noted that in the low range the sentence structures are little more than simple sentences, with the subject/verb kind being very prevalent with a lack of sentences containing subordinate or dependent clauses. Where an attempt was made at using a more complex form, the run-on sentence became the norm and a lack of proper transition words was observed. Conjunctions such as "but, and, so" were often used at the beginning of sentences.

7. USAGE

Usage refers to the "correctness" of the structures used by a writer. Difficulties in such areas as verb tense, subject-verb agreement, pronoun reference and the like fall into the area of usage.

HIGH (5 OR 6)

- the usage is correct and appropriate to the level of presentation of the material

MIDDLE (3 OR 4)

- few usage errors appear and they do not detract from the impact of the discourse

LOW (1 OR 2)

- errors detract substantially from the readability and the impression of the paper

Results

7.7% of the students were in the high range (5-6)
82.2% were in the middle range (3-4)
10.1% were in the low range (0-2) with a mean of 3.36

Eighty-nine point nine percent (89.9%) of the students placed in the high and middle ranges. These results indicate that this area represents a strength in the students' writing.

Interpretation

Eighty-two point two percent (82.2%) of the students performed in the middle range on this characteristic with another 7.7% in high range. These high figures indicate that most students perform at a level that is appropriate for their grade level in this area. Few usage errors appeared and they did not detract from the impact of the discourse. Some past tenses of verbs were incorrectly used, e.g., "brang" for "brought" - "seen" for "saw". The misuse of homonyms - "too-to-two, their-they're, its-it's, your-you're" - can be expected at this level.

8. PUNCTUATION AND USE OF CAPITALS

HIGH (5 OR 6)

- in general, the writer uses capitals and punctuates correctly
- capitals and punctuation are used to make the writing clear and readable

MIDDLE (3 OR 4)

- errors in use of capitals and punctuation may be present but do not perceptibly detract from the clarity or readability of the paper

LOW (1 OR 2)

- errors in use of capitals and punctuation substantially detract from the clarity or readability of the paper

Results

10.6% of the students were in the high range (5-6)
65.4% were in the middle range (3-4)
24.0% were in the low range (0-2) with a mean of 3.16

Seventy-six percent (76.0%) of the students scored in the high and middle ranges. These results indicate that this is an area which needs improvement.

Interpretation

With regard to the use of punctuation and the use of capitals, 76.0% scored a 3 or above on a possible score of 6. In general, the errors that were present did not perceptibly detract from the clarity and readability of the paper, and many of those observed were expected at this stage due to interference from the students' second language. A strong interference was apparent in capital letters of days and months and such words as "Egyptian", "English", "French". The word "I" was often written "i". The period and question mark were generally used correctly; a lack of commas separating words in a list was evident. Some attempt was made to use quotation marks.

9. SPELLING

HIGH (5 OR 6)

- spelling attracts little or no attention
- if errors in mature words do appear, they reflect meaningful "guesses" at the words being used

MIDDLE (3 OR 4)

- few spelling errors appear in the writing, but in general the errors do not detract from the impact or readability of the paper
- most "guesses" are reasonable

LOW (1 OR 2)

- errors in spelling detract substantially from the readability and impression of the paper
- the reader must stop and puzzle over words to figure out what they are or what the writer intended

Results

6.7% of the students were in the high range (5-6)
70.2% were in the middle range (3-4)
23.1% were in the low range (0-2) with a mean of 3.15

Seventy-six percent point nine percent (76.9%) of the students scored in the middle and high ranges. This indicates an area which needs improvement.

Interpretation

The spelling scores indicate that 76.9% of the writers placed in the middle/high range. In most cases the spelling errors that appeared in the writing did not detract from the impact or readability of the paper. In fact, it was felt that basic spelling words appropriate to a grade 4 level were already well in place. Where spelling errors appeared, they were, in many cases, due to the influence of the student's second language and were in fact very predictable. Interferences were detected in words that contained the "sh" and "ch" and "w" and "wh" sounds, e.g., "bruched for brushed", "Britiche for British". It was noticed that the inappropriate use of the final "e" was prevalent, e.g., "wase for was", "tooke for took", and that many similar sounding words were misspelled, e.g., "clou for clue", "brun for brown", "humain for human", "allez for alley".

REPORT WRITING - GRADE 4

Many of the observations that were made with respect to story writing also apply to report writing. Nevertheless, since the two tasks differed in their genre, some differences have been noted and will be commented upon in the following pages.

1. ORGANIZATION AND SEQUENCE

In report writing the organization of detail should be clear and arranged according to the sub-topic. The introduction and conclusion should aid the reader in thinking about and understanding the topic.

HIGH (5 OR 6)

- effective opening that catches the interest of the reader
- sub-topic details are arranged in paragraphs
- effective closing that tells the reader that the report is finished

MIDDLE (3 OR 4)

- attempts an opening but does not catch the interest of the reader
- sub-topic details are grouped appropriately but not always paragraphed
- weak ending, no sense of closure

LOW (1 OR 2)

- no attempt to catch the reader's attention in the opening
- sub-topic details are ordered inappropriately
- no feeling of closure

Results

5.8% of the students were in the high range (5-6)
61.0% were in the middle range (3-4)
33.2% were in the low range (0-2) with a mean of 2.89

Sixty-six point eight percent (66.8%) of the students scored in the high and middle ranges. These results indicate a need for improvement in this area.

Interpretation

The scores in this area are very similar to the scores in organization and sequence in story writing, that is, 66.8% of the students placed in the 3 and above range with 33.2% performing below. Again, it was felt that the students' writings revealed some knowledge and application of introduction and conclusion although in many cases these two elements were rather weak. Very often the opening was not effective and one was left with no sense of closure. Paragraphing was usually present, although, details were not always ordered appropriately.

2. WORDING/STYLE

Word choice refers to the choice of vocabulary the writer makes in writing the story and how the writer strings those words together into phrases, sentences, or longer thought-units. In report writing, the vocabulary should be precise and topic-related (appropriate). The words and ways in which they are strung together should be clearly understandable.

HIGH (5 OR 6)

- wide choice of descriptive words is used to create the image for the reader

MIDDLE (3 OR 4)

- limited choice of descriptive words, some repetition
- vocabulary may be too general

LOW (1 OR 2)

- vocabulary is very limited, colourless, does not aid description

Results

6.3% of the students were in the high range (5-6)
59.1% were in the middle range (3-4)
34.6% were in the low range (0-2) with a mean of 2.94

Sixty-five point four percent (65.4%) of the students scored in the middle and high ranges. This is a weak area in need of improvement.

Interpretation

This characteristic in report writing is an area where the scores denote a certain weakness. Thirty-four point six (34.6%) of the students obtained a score of 2 or less with 65.4% placing in the middle and high range. It was observed that much of the vocabulary used in describing the chosen subject was vague and inaccurate. Few descriptive words were used and because of a lack of alternative words or synonyms much repetition was present.

3. FOCUS OR THEME

The writer chooses aspects, incidents, and details because they relate to the purpose of writing. She/he seems to have a central focus and maintains that throughout the piece. There seems to be a theme holding each of the paper's elements together.

HIGH (5 OR 6)

- central focus for the story
- develops elements so they directly relate to the central focus
- story focus is clearly discernible
- events have been sufficiently covered at the conclusion
- no unrelated details are included

MIDDLE (3 OR 4)

- central focus exists but elements are not clearly related to focus
- the purpose is not clearly identifiable
- at times, the writer interjects information, opinions, or details unrelated to the central focus
- intrusions do not seriously interfere with the thrust or movement
- at the conclusion, the reader feels as if the events have been covered but that the movement of the story has been interrupted

LOW (1 OR 2)

- story has no central focus or thematic movement
- unrelated information, opinions, and details seem to be added
- at the conclusion, the reader is likely to question the main point or purpose of the story

Results

7.7% of the students were in the high range (5-6)
66.3% were in the middle range (3-4)
26.0% were in the low range (0-2) with a mean of 3.09

Seventy-four percent (74.0%) of the students scored in the middle and high ranges. This indicates a need for improvement in this area.

Interpretation

The scores on focus, where the writer chooses aspects, incidents and details because they relate to the theme, show that 74.0% of the students are performing at a level appropriate for grade 4. In nearly three-fourths of the papers the central focus is maintained throughout, while 26.0% of the students find some difficulty in developing the topic fully. The markers commented that in several cases, the writer found it easier to stick to the theme when writing a piece of non-fiction which he/she had researched than to do the same in the narrative task.

4. IDEAS

In the case of the report writing the basic idea was a given. The student was asked to write a report on an animal of his choice.

HIGH (5 OR 6)

- appropriate and meaningful ideas
- dealt with the topic in a unique, creative fashion
- humour, interesting figures of speech or the like are used
- interesting point of view

MIDDLE (3 OR 4)

- generally sound development of the idea
- does not reflect a unique or creative point of view
- no attempt has been made to employ humour, interesting figures of speech, or comparisons

LOW (1 OR 2)

- ideas do not reflect sound or creative thinking
- story is lifeless - ideas do not congeal as a whole
- writing reflects mental wandering rather than logical or creative thinking

Results

9.1% of the students were in the high range (5-6)
62.5% were in the middle range (3-4)
28.4% were in the low range (0-2) with a mean of 3.06

Seventy-one point six percent (71.6%) of the students scored in the high and middle ranges. These results indicate a need for improvement in this area.

Interpretation

With regard to the ideas, 71.6% of the students made a good attempt at developing their idea to form an interesting and inclusive report since they placed in the 3 and above range. The other 28.4% found it difficult to deal with the subject in an interesting and logical way.

5. CHOICE OF DETAILS AND ELABORATION OF IDEAS

The details chosen by a writer, how particular ideas within a paper have been elaborated, and how real and vivid the writing is can make the difference between a listless, lifeless paper and an exciting, engaging paper.

HIGH (5 OR 6)

- reveals a wide knowledge of the subject; shown by use of many details
- details are chosen to be of interest to the reader
- description is alive, real to the reader, and clear

MIDDLE (3 OR 4)

- displays adequate knowledge of the subject but lacking rich detail
- the writing seems to lack life

LOW (1 OR 2)

- minimal knowledge of the subject, few details

Results

10.1% of the students were in the high range (5-6)
59.6% were in the middle range (3-4)
30.3% were in the low range (0-2) with a mean of 3.04

Sixty-nine point seven percent (69.7%) of the students scored in the middle and high ranges. This would indicate that choice of details and elaboration is a weak area in need of improvement.

Interpretation

The scores on choice of detail and elaboration of ideas are consistent with the scores of no. 4 on the analytical scale "Ideas". Sixty-nine point 7 percent (69.7%) of the papers revealed adequate knowledge of the subject with 10% of them showing that these students had a wide knowledge of the animal chosen by the elaboration of details and by the sharing of this with the reader in a lively descriptive style. Thirty point three percent (30.3%) of the papers showed a minimal knowledge of their subject as evidenced by the lack of details in spite of the fact that research on the topic of their choice was to have been done the night before. The score obtained in this area of report writing is better than the same one in story writing. This may be due to the different kind of writing and preparations involved in the two tasks.

6. SENTENCE STRUCTURE

No hard and fast rules can be set down for sentence structure. At times, a variety of sentence structures is appropriate to create and maintain reader interest. Sometimes repetitive patterns can create a desired effect. Sometimes, short, choppy sentences are appropriate to the topic and discourse; at other times, long, elegant structures are appropriate.

HIGH (5 OR 6)

- positive effect is created in the use of sentence structures
- writer has control of a variety of structures and employs them effectively

MIDDLE (3 OR 4)

- writer has control of a number of sentence structures but at times the structures are ambiguous or clumsy

LOW (1 OR 2)

- little more than simple sentences
- a small number of structures are repeated
- paper is boring or predictable
- writer has serious difficulties in presenting effectively constructed sentences

Results

8.2% of the students were in the high range (5-6)
68.2% were in the middle range (3-4)
23.6% were in the low range (0-2) with a mean of 3.15

Seventy-six point four percent (76.4%) of the students scored in the high and middle ranges. These results indicate that this is an area needing improvement.

Interpretation

In the high range where 8.2% of the students placed, there was evidence of a variety of sentences: simple, complex, inverted, exclamatory, etc. In the middle range (68.2%) less complex sentences were present; sentences were shorter and of more simple structure but in most cases they were effectively constructed except in some instances where they were ambiguous or clumsy. In the low range (23.6%), little more than simple sentences were used, and run-on or incomplete sentences were repeatedly observed.

7. USAGE

Usage refers to the "correctness" of the structures used by a writer. Difficulties in such areas as verb tense, subject-verb agreement, pronoun reference, and the like fall into the area of usage.

HIGH (5 OR 6)

- the usage is correct and appropriate to the level of presentation of the material

MIDDLE (3 OR 4)

- few usage errors appear and they do not detract from the impact of the discourse

LOW (1 OR 2)

- errors detract substantially from the readability and the impression of the paper

Results

17.3% of the students were in the high range (5-6)
75.0% were in the middle range (3-4)
7.7% were in the low range (0-2) with a mean of 3.62

Ninety-two point three percent (92.3%) of the students placed in the high and middle ranges. These results indicate that this area is a strength in the students' writing.

Interpretation

Again, as for story writing, this area of usage appears as a strength for these students in grade 4 Immersion. Ninety-two point three percent (92.3%) had little difficulty in such areas as verb-tense, subject verb agreement. The usage, in most papers, was correct and appropriate for the level of presentation of the material and the usage errors did not detract from the impact of the report. Nevertheless, pronoun reference caused some difficulties with several pieces of writing showing a change in pronoun (e.g., "it" to "they") from one paragraph to another and sometimes within the same paragraph. For the 7.7% in the low range the major difficulties appeared to lay in the verb tense and pronoun reference, especially when there was a change in paragraphing.

8. PUNCTUATION AND USE OF CAPITALS

HIGH (5 OR 6)

- in general, the writer uses capitals and punctuates correctly
- capitals and punctuation are used to make the writing clear and readable

MIDDLE (3 OR 4)

- errors in use of capitals and punctuation may be present but do not perceptibly detract from the clarity and readability of the paper

LOW (1 OR 2)

- errors in use of capitals and punctuation substantially detract from the clarity or readability of the paper

Results

25.0% of the students were in the high range (5-6)
65.4% were in the middle range (3-4)
9.6% were in the low range (0-2) with a mean of 3.72

Ninety point four percent (90.4%) of the students performed in the high and middle ranges. These indicate that this is a strength in the students' writing.

Interpretation

Punctuation and the use of capitals appear as a strength for these students with 90.4% of them performing in the middle to high range. Again, it is noted that the concept of punctuation in some cases and capitalization is reinforced by the students' knowledge of these concepts in French. On the other hand, where errors in these skills occur, they are often due to interference from their second language.

9. SPELLING

HIGH (5 OR 6)

- spelling attracts little or no attention
- if errors in mature words do appear, they reflect meaningful "guesses" at the words being used

MIDDLE (3 OR 4)

- few spelling errors appear in the writing, but in general the errors do not detract from the impact or readability of the paper
- most "guesses" are reasonable

LOW (1 OR 2)

- errors in spelling substantially detract from the readability and impression of the paper
- the reader must stop and puzzle over words to figure out what they are or what the writer intended

Results

13.9% of the students were in the high range (5-6)
69.3% were in the middle range (3-4)
16.8% were in the low range (0-2) with a mean of 3.37

Eighty-three point two percent (83.2%) of the students scored in the high and middle ranges indicating this is an area where students' performance was satisfactory.

Interpretation

The students appear to be relatively strong in spelling with 83.2% obtaining a score of 3 or more. It was recognized that as in story writing, the basic spelling words were well on the way to being mastered by many. A number of words misspelled because of interference from the second language in no way detracted from the impact or readability of the text.

More students placed in the high range (13.9%) for spelling in report writing than in story writing (6.7%). This might have been due to the nature of the task where it was observed that the writers took fewer risks with words in report writing than in story writing.

Summary

Results from the GIM indicate that in story writing 86.1% of the grade 4 Immersion students performed in the middle and high range; in report writing 79.3% of the students attained the same level of performance. These results indicate that an acceptable percentage of the grade 4 students present a paper either in story or report writing where the quality of thought and expression is appropriate for the grade level. In all aspects of presentation a good percentage of papers demonstrated performance that was acceptable for a grade 4 Immersion student.

In attempting to explain, however, why students performed slightly better in story writing than in report writing, it was felt that the answer may be found in the different genres represented by both tasks and the diverse demands placed on the writer. In grade 4, many students are still at the egocentric stage of psychological development which makes it difficult for them to be objective in a report and therefore inclined to include unrelated information and details or interject personal opinions.

Analytical Scale

Mechanics. In the two assigned writing tasks, approximately two-thirds of grade 4 Immersion students placed in the middle to high range in all areas of the analytical scale with the mechanics (usage, punctuation/capitals (in report writing)) appearing as a strength and usage performance being exceptionally high (above 89% in high/middle). Interferences in punctuation/capitals and spelling were evident, but this was expected at this stage in Immersion. Most spelling errors due to interference (e.g., "clou for clue", "humain for human") did not detract from the readability of the paper. It was felt that the spelling of most of the basic words at that level was developmentally acceptable. More students placed in the high range for spelling (13.9%) in report writing than in story writing (6.7%). This might be due to the nature of the task where writing a narrative involves more risk-taking with words than does report writing.

Other interferences were detected in words containing the "sh"/"ch" - "w/wh" sounds. The inappropriate use of the final "e" was very prevalent, e.g., "wase for was", "tooke for took". A strong interference was evident in capital letters of days and months in such words as "Egyptian", "English" and the word "I" was often written "i". The period and question mark posed few problems, but the comma was not properly used in lists. In usage, the errors that appeared did not detract from the discourse and were of the kind that very often appears in writing at this stage of development, e.g., verb tenses incorrectly used such as "brang for brought", "seen for saw", and a change of pronoun within a paragraph or from one paragraph to the other. The misuse of homonyms "too-to-two", "your,you're" can be expected at this level.

It was generally accepted that in both story writing and report writing the basic mechanics of writing were well on the way to being mastered by a good percentage of the students and that a number of interference errors present would eventually disappear.

The areas that denote a need for improvement are those of organization/sequence, sentence structure, word choice, focus (especially in report writing), ideas, and details/elaboration.

Sentence Structure. In the area of sentence structure, the students placing in the high range demonstrated an effective use of a variety of sentence structures (including some sentences with clauses) in both pieces of writing. In the middle range, less complex sentences were present. Although they were shorter and of simpler structure, in many cases they were effectively constructed. In other instances where an attempt was made at using a more complex structure, sentences were often ambiguous or clumsy. In the low range little more than simple sentences of the subject/verb were present, with run-on or incomplete sentences being found. A lack of proper transition words was observed, with many sentences beginning with such words as "But, And, So".

Organization and Sequence. In the area of organization, the students did somewhat better in story writing than they did in report writing. It was felt that this may have been due to the fact that students do report writing less often than story writing.

Students' writings revealed some knowledge and application of introduction and conclusion, although, in many cases these two elements were rather weak. Many openings were ineffective and did not catch the interest of the reader. Furthermore often after reading the paper, one was left with little or no sense of closure. Paragraphing was usually present although the sequence of events (in story writing) or sub-topic details (in report writing) was sometimes confusing or inappropriately ordered.

Wording/style. Word choice is another area where some weakness was detected (especially in report writing). One noted that much of the vocabulary used in both pieces of writing was too general, imprecise, and vague and there was an overuse of non-specific words such as "interesting", "good". Few descriptive words were used and because of the lack of synonyms much repetition was present. Wording and style often seemed colourless and uninteresting.

Focus. In the area of focus, the performance of the students was somewhat better for report writing than for story writing. This may have been due to the fact that many found it easier to stick to the theme when writing a piece of non-fiction than to do the same in a narrative task. In report writing nearly three-fourths of the papers maintained the focus throughout. In story writing, opinions, information, and details unrelated to the central theme were often interjected and quite a few writers interrupted the movement of their writing and got lost in their fantasy, either unconsciously or because they wished to lengthen their story.

Ideas. The basic idea was given for both pieces of writing. In report writing, in spite of being given time to research their subject, 29.1% of the students found it difficult to deal with the topic in an interesting and logical way. In story writing, the ideas were generally sound, but were often not dealt with in a unique or creative fashion. TV influence was very present and much modelling after book characters was done. There was little attempt at humour or interesting figures of speech and when idiomatic phrases were present they were often misused, thereby detracting from the meaning.

Choice of Details and Elaboration of Ideas. This area presented the most difficulty for the students, especially in story writing. The better score obtained in report writing in this area may be indicative of the kind of writing and preparation involved in both tasks. However, in report writing, 30.5% of the papers showed minimal knowledge of the subject evidenced by the lack of details, and the style of writing lacked in real, descriptive qualities. In story writing, many of the papers were found to be listless and lifeless rather than engaging and exciting. The absence of imagery and meaningful vocabulary did not allow the writing to come to life. In many cases the writing lacked voice, and because there was little or no elaboration of details, the process or events could not be clearly visualized. However, out of the 38.0% of the students in the low range, 31% obtained a score of 2 which suggests that appropriate pre-writing activities would greatly enhance this area for all students concerned.

Overview

To sum up, GIM results show that an acceptable percentage of the grade 4 Immersion students can write a paper, either in story or report form, where the quality of thought and effectiveness of overall organization and presentation is appropriate for the grade 4 level.

The analytical scale shows strengths in the mechanics of writing, e.g., usage, punctuation/capitals, and spelling, in spite of interferences from the second language in some areas.

These results might be indicative of transfers of learning occurring from one language to another, although it is more difficult to pinpoint transfers than to pinpoint interferences. The transfers of learning would compensate for the time constraint placed on the teaching of English Language Arts in an Immersion setting.

Areas which need to be strengthened are those of organization/sequence and sentence structure, focus, ideas, and especially detail (elaboration). These characteristics of writing will most benefit from classroom strategies that foster the development of ideas and vocabulary and promote organization and sentence variety, e.g., discussions, brain-storming, mapping/webbing, sentence manipulation (on a regular basis in English and in French). Research skills, organization and presentation, and theme development strategies would benefit from instruction received in both languages and points to the need to maintain or implement the "process of writing" in all Immersion classrooms.

CHAPTER 4

Grade 8 Results

The grade 8 test was composed of three parts:

PART I - Persuasive Writing (Personal Opinion)
PART II - Narrative Writing
PART III - Spelling Dictation.

PART I: In Persuasive Writing students were asked to take a position for or against an issue and to convince the reader to accept the writer's viewpoint.

There were two sessions set aside for this test. The first session allowed the student 10 minutes to decide upon a position; 10 minutes to share ideas with a partner; and 25 minutes to write a rough draft.

The second session of 50 minutes was to be spent in revising, editing, and proofreading and rewriting the final draft.

PART II: In Narrative Writing the student had to construct a story set in one of four time periods. The story begins as the writer leaves a time machine.

Two sessions were set aside for PART II. The first session (45 minutes) allowed time for the preparation of a rough draft. The second session (50 minutes) was to be used for revising, editing, proofreading, and rewriting the final draft.

PART III: The Spelling test comprised a list of 24 selected words.

PERSUASIVE WRITING

	LOW	MIDDLE	HIGH	MEAN
GIM	13.9%	58.1%	28.0%	7.08
1. Organization and Sequence	20.4	60.7	18.8	3.41
2. Wording and Style	12.9	72.6	14.5	3.45
3. Focus or Theme	24.2	58.1	17.8	3.40
4. Ideas	31.2	56.4	12.4	3.16
5. Detail/Elaboration	35.4	53.3	11.3	3.00
6. Sentence Structure	18.3	69.8	11.8	3.34
7. Usage	16.2	75.8	8.0	3.38
8. Punctuation/Capitals	14.0	67.2	18.9	3.60
9. Spelling	10.2	68.3	21.5	3.65

NARRATIVE WRITING

	LOW	MIDDLE	HIGH	MEAN
GIM	15.5%	54.1%	30.4%	7.17
1. Organization and Sequence	18.2	50.3	31.5	3.65
2. Wording and Style	17.7	58.0	24.3	3.61
3. Focus or Theme	22.7	46.4	30.9	3.57
4. Ideas	23.2	51.9	24.9	3.56
5. Detail/Elaboration	26.5	52.5	21.0	3.39
6. Sentence Structure	25.4	51.4	23.2	3.44
7. Usage	14.9	58.0	27.1	3.72
8. Punctuation/Capitals	21.5	47.0	31.5	3.67
9. Spelling	18.8	46.4	34.9	3.85

NOTE: Number of students tested = 186

The 1988 grade 8 Writing Assessment test was administered to a random sample consisting of 20% of all students enrolled in grade 8 Language Arts Immersion programs. The returned sample totalled 186 papers.

Both tasks, persuasive writing and narrative writing, were rated twice on a scale of 0-6 by two different markers (0's were assigned if there was insufficient material to rate). The two scores were then combined for a score on 12.

General Impression Marking (GIM)

General Impression Marking is a judgment about the overall quality of the student's writing given the purpose of the writing and the audience to which it is addressed (in the provincial tests, the audience in every case is a student's classmates). The GIM scale attempts to rate compositions in a general, global manner. Areas covered include the quality of thought evident in the paper, the effectiveness of the overall organization, the effectiveness of the overall presentation, and the effectiveness of style and word choice. Evaluation of specific attributes of writing are left to the analytic marking scales.

Samples scoring in the high range revealed the following qualities:

High (5 or 6)

These papers had evidence of sound thinking on the part of the writer. The quality of thought reflected a mature point of view. The organization of the paper indicated careful planning and thinking on the part of the writer, and the paper was presented in an effective, meaningful fashion. The style was appropriate to the level of thought and organization of the paper, and the word choice and use reflected a mature, sophisticated grasp of language and language use. The level of the paper was appropriate for the audience being addressed (in this case, a student's classmates) and fulfilled the identified purpose.

Samples scoring in the middle range revealed the following qualities:

Middle (3 or 4)

In this category the students' writings is judged to be appropriate to the grade level of the student but reflects a level of maturity less than adult-like. The organization of the paper is generally appropriate, though the writer might have been more careful in planning and carrying out an organizational pattern. The thinking, for the most part, is meaningful, but at times the paper may wander from the central thrust or movement. The style, though generally appropriate to the level of thought and organization of the paper, may reflect some inconsistencies or repetitions to the point of being, at times, distracting. Word choice reflects the level and maturity of the student but may not, at all times, be appropriate to the audience to which the paper is addressed. In general the paper achieves its identified purpose, but it may wander or not take advantage of obvious opportunities in achieving that purpose.

Samples scoring in the low range denoted the following characteristics:

Low (1 or 2)

In this range, the thinking that is evident in the paper seems inconsistent and immature, reflecting an identifiably egocentric point of view. The organization of the paper is difficult to follow and does not reflect any careful planning or any meaningful organizational pattern. The thrust or movement of the paper is interrupted by wandering discourse, unnecessary asides, or inappropriate information. The style is inconsistent and immature, and repetitive or uninteresting structures are consistently used. Word choice is inappropriate, distracting, and shallow. The writer seems to have little consideration for the audience or reader and does not consistently address himself/herself to the identified purpose of the paper.

Results on 12

Persuasive Writing			Narrative Writing		
High (9-12)		28.0%	High (9-12)		30.4%
Middle (5-8)		58.1%	Middle (5-8)		54.1%
Low (0-4)		13.9%	Low (0-4)		15.5%
Mean	7.08		Mean	7.17	

In persuasive writing 86.1% of the students scored in the high and middle ranges. In the narrative writing 84.5% scored in the middle and high ranges. These results indicate that an acceptable percentage of the grade 8 Immersion students present a paper in both genres of writing where the quality of thought and expression is appropriate for the grade level. In all aspects of organization and presentation, these papers demonstrated performance acceptable for a grade 8 Immersion student. It was noted that these students had a general awareness of the qualities particular to the two tasks.

Note: Whereas the percentages in the low range of the narrative writing are higher than those of persuasive writing (indicating a weakness on every item of the analytical scale), the percentages in the high range of narrative writing are higher than the percentages in the high range of persuasive writing. This is due to a shift from the middle to the high range in all areas of the scale for narrative writing. This indicates that a good percentage of the top students did better in all areas, in narrative writing, than they did in persuasive writing.

Persuasive Writing

In this task, the writer was asked to take a position for or against an issue and to write to convince the reader.

1. ORGANIZATION AND SEQUENCE (for personal opinion essay)

In personal opinion writing, the organization should follow a logical, usually causal, sequence. The essay should indicate that the topic has been effectively introduced, the major points should follow one another logically, and the paper should come to an effective close or conclusion. Organization and sequence is probably most evident in the major topics and in the concluding paragraph.

HIGH (5 OR 6):
The writer has written an effective opening that will catch the interest of the reader. The organization follows a logical sequence. The closing is effective in that it leads the reader to feel that the paper will be complete and brings the essay to a conclusion.

MIDDLE (3 or 4):
The writer generally introduces the subject but does nothing to catch the interest of the reader. Although all the points presented may be valid or logical arguments, they do not seem ordered in the most effective manner. The paper may have a weak ending or may leave the reader with little or no sense of closure.

LOW (1 or 2):
The essay does not reflect an effective opening and the major points in the paper are not logical or valid. The sequence of major topics does not seem to follow any logical pattern. The conclusion leaves the reader with little or no sense of closure. The entire essay leaves the reader confused about the arguments or their importance.

Results

High (5-6) - 18.8%
Middle (3-4) - 60.7%
Low (0-2) - 20.4% Mean 3.41

Seventy-nine point five percent (79.5%) of the students placed in the high and middle ranges. These results indicate that this is an area which is not extremely weak, but needs improvement.

Interpretation

In this area, four (4) out of five (5) students placed either in the middle or high range (60.7% for middle - 18.8% for high). For the students scoring in the high range, the papers were well planned and organized. The introduction caught the interest of the reader, the organization followed a logical sequence, and the closing was effective in that it lead the reader to feel the paper was complete. For the 60.7% of the students in the middle range, difficulties were encountered in one or more of the following areas: in sequential and logical presentation of points, in the categorization of arguments that belonged together in the same paragraph. In many cases, conclusions were sketchy and not summative, lacked a "wrap-up" element, and left the reader with little or no sense of closure. The students in the low range encountered most or all of these difficulties.

2. WORDING AND STYLE

Wording refers to the choice of vocabulary the writer makes in the paper. Style refers to the ways in which those words are strung together by phrases, sentences, or longer thought-units. Word choice needs to reflect both precision and maturity, as well as appropriateness to the audience being addressed. The writer should be aware of the level of his/her audience and explain words used in a highly specific or technical manner. The writer should also strive for an interesting, engaging style, one that is both easy to read and understand, and interesting and varied in structure and length. Both wording and style need to be clean and clearly understandable.

HIGH (5 OR 6):

The words chosen by the writer reflect sensitivity to the audience being addressed. The words are precise and exact, with clear reference. The style is interesting, sentences are varied as to length and structure when appropriate, and the structures are clear and easy to read and understand. The style is engaging, and the words help the reader clearly "see" and understand the process or series of events.

MIDDLE (3 or 4):

The words chosen by the writer may have appropriate referents, but they do not reflect a sensitivity to the reader/audience. The emphasis seems to be on the content, rather than on the communication. When technical or specific words are used, they are not well explained or defined. The style is repetitive to the point of being noticeable, or inappropriately long or short sentences interfere, at times, with the ease of reading. Though correctly used, vocabulary may be too general for the type of writing.

LOW (1 or 2):

The writer seems to have no sense of audience whatsoever. Words or phrases chosen may not aid the reader in understanding the events and may interfere with comprehension. Sentences are either too long to be read with ease, or too short to create a flow. The words and style seem colourless, non-engaging, uninteresting.

Results

High (5-6) - 14.5%
Middle (3-4) - 72.6%
Low (0-2) - 12.9% Mean 3.45

Eighty-seven point one percent (87.1%) of the students placed in the high and middle ranges. These results indicate that this is a strength in these students' writing.

Interpretation

Eighty-seven point one percent (87.1%) of the students performed in the middle and high ranges. In the high range students displayed innovative styles in their presentation such as the use of an editorial or a letter. Many reflected a sensitivity to the audience being addressed. In the middle range, some of the writers emphasized content rather than communication, often the vocabulary was too general for this type of writing, and there was a lack of expressive verbs. In the low range, students encountered difficulties in finding words and phrases that were suitable to express the purpose of the writing. Some papers revealed an unawareness that written language cannot be manipulated like oral language.

3. FOCUS OR THEME

The writer chooses aspects, incidents, and details because they relate to the purpose of writing. She/he seems to have a central focus and maintains that throughout the piece. There seems to be a theme holding each of the story's elements together. Focus or theme are probably best reflected in the paper's title, the major thesis, and the conclusion.

HIGH (5 or 6)
The writer clearly has a central focus for the paper and develops each of the elements in the essay so that it directly relates to that central focus. The purpose of the paper is clearly discernible. The writer does not present information, opinions, or details that do not relate to the central purpose of the essay. After reading, the reader feels as if the topic has been sufficiently covered without undue reference to unimportant or unrelated material.

MIDDLE (3 or 4):
The writer has a central focus for the paper, but the relationship of each of the elements within the paper is not clearly related to the focus. The purpose of the paper is not always clearly identifiable and, at times, the writer has interjected information, opinions, or details that do not relate to the central focus. These materials, however, do not seriously interfere with the thrust or movement of the essay. At the conclusion, the reader feels as if the argument or explanation has been covered, but that the movement of the paper or plan has been interrupted along the way by unnecessary, incomplete, or unrelated elements.

LOW (1 or 2):
The paper does not seem to have a meaningful central focus or thematic movement. Elements within the paper seem unrelated to any central purpose. Information, opinions, and details seem to be added with little concern as to how they relate to the total argument or explanation. At the conclusion, the reader is likely to wonder what the main point or purpose of the essay was.

Results

High	(5-6)	-	17.8%		
Middle	(3-4)	-	58.1%		
Low	(0-2)	-	24.2%	Mean	3.40

Seventy-five point nine percent (75.9%) of the students placed in the high and middle ranges. This is an area in the students' writing that needs improvement.

Interpretation

In this attribute of writing, 58.1% placed in the middle range, 17.8% in the high range and 24.2% in the low. The high (17.8% of the students) had a good grasp of the focus and developed each of the elements in the essay so that it directly related to the topic. The writers in the middle range also had a theme holding each of the paper's details together. Although some unrelated information and opinions may have been interjected, the reader felt, at the conclusion, that he/she had been convinced by the argument provided. In the low range many of the elements were unrelated to the topic. Information, details, and opinions had been added without any concern about how they supported the argument or explanation.

4. IDEAS

The ideas presented in a paper reflect the quality, uniqueness, and creativity of the thinking involved in the development of the paper. The selection of the topic, the choice of point of view, the selection and shaping of details are all involved in the presentation and development of the ideas.

HIGH (5 or 6)
The writer has selected an interesting, engaging topic, has selected appropriate and meaningful ideas to discuss and describe, and may have dealt with the topic in a unique, creative fashion. Humour, interesting figures of speech, or the like, may be used or attempted in relating events. An interesting point of view may have been selected.

MIDDLE (3 or 4)
Though the ideas presented in the paper are generally sound, they do not reflect a unique or creative point of view in dealing with the topic. No attempt has been made to employ humour, interesting figures of speech, comparisons or the like in order to make the paper more interesting or lively.

LOW (1 or 2)
The ideas presented do not reflect sound or creative thinking. Not only is the paper lifeless, but the ideas do not congeal as a whole and seem to reflect mental wandering rather than logical or creative thinking.

Results

High	(5-6)	-	12.4%		
Middle	(3-4)	-	56.4%		
Low	(0-2)	-	31.2%	Mean	3.16

Sixty-eight point eight percent (68.8%) of the students placed in the high and middle ranges. This is a weak area in the students' writing.

Interpretation

This area was identified as being one of the weaker ones with 31.2% scoring in the low range. Twelve point four percent (12.4%) performed in the high range. These writers had selected interesting topics and dealt with them in a unique and creative fashion. In the middle range (56.4%), many of the ideas in the paper were generally sound, but they did not reflect a creative and unique point of view. Papers in the low range did not reflect logical thinking nor creativity. It was generally felt that although uniqueness and creativity may be difficult to teach, a greater variety and number of pre-writing activities would certainly improve this area.

5. CHOICE OF DETAILS AND ELABORATION OF IDEAS

What is important here are the details chosen by a writer, how particular ideas within the essay have been elaborated, and how the details are related.

HIGH (5 or 6)
The details chosen by the writer are appropriate to the explanation or argument. The details appropriately elaborate or illustrate the major points of the paper and are sequenced in a logical, meaningful fashion.

MIDDLE (3 or 4)
The details chosen seem appropriate to the explanation or argument but, at times, the details may not be sequenced appropriately or logically. The supporting details, though appropriate to the paper as a whole, may not relate directly to the major points under which they appear.

LOW (1 or 2)
The details chosen by the writer do not seem appropriate to the purpose of the paper or to the audience. The writer has not adequately elaborated the explanation or argument. Details do not relate to major points or to a valid, meaningful purpose or focus in the essay.

Results

High (5-6) - 11.3%
Middle (3-4) - 53.3%
Low (0-2) - 35.4%
Mean 3.00

Sixty-four point six percent (64.6%) of the students scored in the high and middle ranges. This is a weak area in the students' writing.

Interpretation

With 35.4% of the students performing in the low range, it was felt that this area of writing would need more attention. The students scoring in the high range (11.3%) chose appropriate details to illustrate the points of the paper and sequenced them logically. For students in the middle range (53.3%), difficulties in logical and sequential presentation were apparent. Many times the writer was not able to prove and support his/her point with substantial and meaningful information. The students in the low range (35.4%) were unable to choose details appropriate to the purpose of the paper or to elaborate the explanation. Inadequacies in the collection of details or examples and in the elaboration of these may be a reflection of shortcomings in pre-writing preparation. Various revision activities of (especially group and peer), would also help in the selection of appropriate details and in the clarity of their elaboration.

6. SENTENCE STRUCTURE

No hard and fast rules can be set down for sentence structure. At times, a variety of sentence structures is appropriate to create and maintain reader interest. Sometimes repetitive patterns can create a desired effect. Sometimes, short, choppy sentences are appropriate to the topic and discourse; at other times, long, elegant structures are appropriate.

HIGH (5 or 6)
A positive effect is created by the author in the use of sentence structures. The writer seems to have control of a variety of structures and employs them effectively in communicating.

MIDDLE (3 or 4)
Although the writer seems to have control of a number of sentence structures, at times the structures are ambiguous or clumsy, or the writer may not have taken advantage of opportunities to create a positive effect in varying or repeating sentence structures.

LOW (1 or 2)
The sentence structures are little more than simple sentences; a small number of structures are repeated throughout the paper so that the paper becomes boring or predictable. The writer seems to have serious difficulties in presenting effectively constructed sentences.

Results

High	(5-6)	-	11.8%
Middle	(3-4)	-	69.8%
Low	(0-2)	-	18.3%
Mean	3.34		

Eighty-one point six percent (81.6%) of students scored in the high and middle ranges. This indicates that students' performance in this area was satisfactory.

Interpretation

In this case, 81.6% of the students placed in the high and middle ranges, indicating an ability on the part of these writers to control a variety of sentence structures and to employ them effectively in communicating. What differentiated the writers in the middle range from their peers in the high range was that although these students seemed to have control of a variety of sentence structures, at times these sentences were ambiguous or clumsy. For those students who placed in the low range (18.3%), it was obvious that they were unaccustomed to taking risks with sentence manipulation. There was little evidence of attempts at complex sentences or at varying sentence order. They stuck to a simple subject/verb order type of sentence throughout. Many times, the sentence structures were not appropriate or effective.

7. USAGE

Usage refers to the "correctness" of the structures used by a writer. Difficulties in such areas as verb tense, subject-verb agreement, pronoun reference and the like fall into the area of usage.

HIGH (5 or 6)

The usage is correct and appropriate to the level of presentation of the material.

MIDDLE (3 or 4)

Few usage errors appear, and they do not detract from the impact of the discourse.

LOW (1 or 2)

Errors detract substantially from the readability and the impression of the paper.

Results

High	(5-6)	-	8.0%
Middle	(3-4)	-	75.8%
Low	(0-2)	-	16.2%
Mean	3.38		

Eighty-three point eight percent (83.8%) of the students scored in the high and middle ranges. This indicates that students' performance in this area is satisfactory.

Interpretation

The results in this area indicate that many elements of usage are already in place. Eighty-three point eight percent (83.8%) of the students are performing at a level appropriate to their grade level. Few usage errors appeared and those that were present did not detract from the impact of the discourse. However, the following errors appeared in writings of all ranges:

- misplaced or lack of apostrophe in contractions
- confusion with certain homonyms, e.g., "there, they're, their"
- lack of clarity in pronoun reference
- lack of subject/verb agreement.

8. PUNCTUATION AND USE OF CAPITALS

HIGH (5 or 6)
In general, the writer uses capitals and punctuates correctly. Capitals and punctuation are used to make the writing clear and readable.

MIDDLE 3 OR 4)
Errors in use of capitals and punctuation may be present but do not perceptibly detract from the clarity or readability of the paper.

LOW (1 OR 2)
Errors in use of capitals and punctuation substantially detract from the clarity or readability of the paper.

Results

High (5-6) - 18.9%
Middle (3-4) - 67.2%
Low (0-2) - 14.0%
Mean 3.60

Eighty-six point one percent (86.1%) of the students scored in the middle and high ranges. These results indicate that this is a strength in the students' writing.

Interpretation

Punctuation and the use of capitals was also high with 86.1% of the students scoring 3 or above out of a possible 6. The most commonly noted error was the incorrect use of commas. Mistakes in capitals were usually caused by interferences from their second language.

9. SPELLING

HIGH (5 or 6)

Spelling attracts little or no attention. If errors in mature words do appear, they reflect meaningful "guesses" at the words being used.

MIDDLE (3 or 4)

Few spelling errors appear in the writing, and in general, the errors do not detract from the impact or readability of the paper. Most "guesses" are reasonable.

LOW (1 or 2)

Errors in spelling substantially detract from the readability and impression of the paper. The reader must stop and puzzle over the words to figure out what they are or what the writer intended.

Results

High (5-6) - 21.5%
Middle (3-4) - 68.3%
Low (0-2) - 10.2%
Mean 3.65

Eighty-nine point eight percent (89.8%) of the students scored in the middle and high ranges. These results indicate that this area is a strength in these students' writings.

Interpretation

The performance of the students was very good in this area with 89.8% of them performing at grade level or above. This is also borne out by the formal spelling test (results are given on page 62). Few spelling errors appeared in the writing and those that did, did not detract from the readability of the paper.

NARRATIVE WRITING

Many of the comments that were made concerning persuasive writing also apply to narrative writing. However, each attribute of the analytic scale will be discussed as it applies to this particular task. In this piece of writing, the student was asked to tell a story about stepping into a time machine which takes him/her to a time period of his/her choice that he/she must describe.

1. ORGANIZATION AND SEQUENCE

In narrative writing, the organization or sequence should generally follow a temporal (time) sequence. The organization for the paper should effectively introduce the situation in general, lead the reader clearly through the series of events, then effectively come to closure. In brief, the writer should effectively introduce the setting, the characters, and should build from this introduction. The introduction and conclusion should aid the reader in thinking about and understanding the series of events.

HIGH (5 or 6)
The writer has an effective opening that catches the interest of the reader. The organization clearly follows a sequence of events without wandering. Effective transitions from one event to another are used to cue the movement of the paper for the reader. The closing is effective in that it leads the reader to feel that the story is over and has come to an understandable conclusion.

MIDDLE (3 or 4)
The writer generally introduces the story, but does not catch the interest of the reader, or the writer begins the writing without providing the reader with the necessary background to the story or explanation. Generally, each of the events is appropriately described, but the writer may not have the movement of events clearly laid out and may not have used effective transitions to aid the reader in following the events. The paper may have a weak ending or may leave the reader with little or no sense of closure.

LOW (1 or 2)
The writer has not attempted to catch the interest of the reader in the opening. Necessary background information may be lacking in the paper. The sequence of events in the paper may be confusing, left out, or ordered so inappropriately that the reader cannot follow the sequence of events. Transition phrases are not used to aid the reader in following the events, and the reader is left with little or no feeling of closure or completeness at the end of the paper. The entire paper may leave the reader confused about what really happened; the reader may be confused about the importance of the events either to the characters described or to the reader.

Results

High	(5-6)	-	31.5%
Middle	(3-4)	-	50.3%
Low	(0-2)	-	18.2%
Mean	3.65		

Eighty-one point eight percent (81.8%) of the students scored in the high and middle ranges. These results indicate that the students' performance in this area is satisfactory.

Interpretation

In this area 81.8% of the students performed at the level of expectancy for this grade. The writers in the high range could organize their writing with an introduction and conclusion; they could effectively introduce the setting and characters and build from the introduction. In general, the students in the middle range had a sense of what makes a good narrative, and an effort was made to produce a presentable piece of writing. However, in many cases, transition phrases were not used to aid the reader in following the events, necessary background information was lacking, or a weak ending left the reader with little sense of closure. The writings of the students in the low range (18.2%) lacked in most or all of the qualities that make for a well organized paper.

2. WORDING AND STYLE

Wording refers to the choice of vocabulary the writer makes in the paper. Style refers to the ways in which those words are strung together in phrases, sentences, or longer thought-units. Word choice needs to reflect both precision and maturity, as well as appropriateness to the audience being addressed. The writer should be aware of the level of his/her audience and explain words used in a highly specific or technical manner. The author should also strive for an interesting, engaging style, one that is both easy to read and understand, and interesting and varied in structure and length. Both wording and style need to be clean and clearly understandable.

HIGH (5 or 6)
The words chosen by the writer reflect sensitivity to the audience being addressed. The words are precise and exact, with clear reference. The style is interesting, sentences are varied as to length and structure when appropriate, and the structures are clear and easy to read and understand. The style is engaging, and the words help the reader clearly "see" and understand the series of events.

MIDDLE (3 or 4)
The words chosen by the writer may have appropriate referents, but they do not reflect a sensitivity to the reader/audience. The emphasis seems to be on the content, rather than on the communication. When technical or specific words are used, they are not well-explained or defined. The style is repetitive to the point of being noticeable, or inappropriately long or short sentences interfere, at times, with the ease of reading. Though correctly used, vocabulary may be too general for the type of writing.

LOW (1 or 2)
The writer seems to have no sense of audience whatsoever. Words or phrases chosen may not aid the reader in understanding the events and may interfere with comprehension. Sentences are either too long to be read with ease, or too short to create a flow. The words and style seem colourless, non-engaging, uninteresting.

Results

High (5-6) - 24.3%
Middle (3-4) - 58.0%
Low (0-2) - 17.7% Mean 3.61

Eighty-two point three percent (82.3%) of the students performed in the high and middle ranges. This indicates that the students' performance in this area is satisfactory.

Interpretation

Twenty-four point three percent (24.3%) of the students placed in the high range in this area, which indicated that these students were able to manipulate words, and vary their sentences as to length and structure when appropriate, in order to present a piece of writing that was engaging and interesting. For the others (58.0%) in middle range), although the task was appropriate for that level, it did not seem to inspire them. Many seemed to experience difficulties in expressing their thoughts in a fluid style through the use of a precise, colourful vocabulary. Some markers felt that students may be bored with the narrative mode. For the 17.7% in the low range, their writing lacked in skillful use of words and sentence length to create a flowing style.

3. FOCUS OR THEME

The writer chooses aspects, incidents, and details because they relate to the purpose of writing. She/he seems to have a central focus and maintains that throughout the piece. There seems to be a theme holding each of the paper's elements together.

HIGH (5 or 6)

The writer clearly has a central focus for the paper and develops each of the elements within the paper so that it directly relates to that central focus. The purpose of the paper is clearly discernible. The writer does not present information, opinions, or details that do not relate to the central purpose of the paper. At the conclusion, the reader feels as if the events have been sufficiently covered without undue reference to unimportant or unrelated material.

MIDDLE (3 or 4)

The writer has a central focus for the paper, but the relationship of each of the elements within the paper is not clearly related to the focus. The purpose of the paper is not always clearly identifiable and, at times, the writer interjects information, opinions, or details that do not relate to the central focus. These intrusions, however, do not seriously interfere with the thrust or movement. At the conclusion, the reader feels as if the events have been covered, but that the movement of the paper has been interrupted along the way by unnecessary, incomplete, or unrelated elements.

LOW (1 or 2)

The paper does not seem to have a central focus or thematic movement. Elements within the paper seem unrelated to any central purpose. Information, opinions, and details seem to be added with little concern as to how they relate to the flow of events. At the conclusion, the reader is likely to wonder what the main point or purpose of the paper was.

Results

High (5-6) - 30.9%
Middle (3-4) - 46.4%
Low (0-2) - 22.7% Mean 3.57

Seventy-seven point three percent (77.3%) of the students scored in the middle and high ranges. These results indicate that this area in the students' writing needs improvement.

Interpretation

Seventy-seven point three percent (77.3%) of the students appeared to have a good grasp of theme. Thirty point nine percent (30.9%) scored in the high range: 46.4% scored in the middle range with 20.4% of these writers scoring a 4 out of a possible 6. This represents a group of 50.5% of the students who scored a 4 or better in this area. These results would indicate that many writers had a central focus for their paper and chose incidents and details because they related to the theme. For the 22.7% who scored in the low range, their paper lacked a central theme, and information and details were added with little concern as to how they related to the focus.

4. IDEAS

The ideas presented in a paper reflect the quality, uniqueness, and creativity of the thinking involved in the development of the paper. The selection of the topic, the choice of point of view, the selection and shaping of details are all involved in the presentation and development of the ideas.

HIGH (5 or 6)
The writer has selected an interesting, engaging topic, appropriate and meaningful ideas to discuss and describe, and may have dealt with the topic in a unique, creative fashion. Humour, interesting figures of speech, or the like, may be used or attempted in relating events. An interesting point of view may have been selected.

MIDDLE (3 or 4)
Though the ideas presented in the paper are generally sound, they do not reflect a unique or creative point of view in dealing with the topic. No attempt has been made to employ humour, interesting figures of speech, comparisons or the like in order to make the paper more interesting or lively.

LOW (1 or 2)
The ideas presented do not reflect sound or creative thinking. Not only is the paper lifeless, but the ideas do not congeal as a whole and seem to reflect mental wandering rather than logical or creative thinking.

Results

High	(5-6)	-	24.9%
Middle	(3-4)	-	51.9%
Low	(0-2)	-	23.2%
Mean	3.56		

Seventy-six point eight percent (76.8%) of the students scored in the high and middle ranges in this area. This indicates that the students' performance in this area needs improvement.

Interpretation

Seventy-six point eight percent (76.8%) of the students placed in the high and middle ranges in this area. The writers in the high range (24.9%) were able to choose meaningful ideas that related to the given topic and develop them in a unique way. For the students in the middle range (51.9%), originality and creativity of thinking were lacking and little attempt was made to employ humour or appropriate figures of speech. The papers of the students in the low range (23.2%) did not reflect sound and creative thinking. It was felt that this area could greatly be enhanced by numerous pre-writing activities.

5. CHOICE OF DETAILS AND ELABORATION OF IDEAS

The details chosen by a writer, how particular ideas within a paper have been elaborated, and how real and vivid the writing is can make the difference between a listless, lifeless paper and an exciting, engaging paper.

HIGH (5 or 6)

The details chosen by the writer are appropriate to the description of the process or the telling of the story, and are elaborated in such a manner as to be interesting to the reader without getting carried away. The words, phrases, imagery, figures of speech, etc. seem to have been selected and presented in such a manner as to make the events or description alive, real to the reader, and clear.

MIDDLE (3 or 4)

The details chosen seem appropriate to the description or story but, at times, the writing seems to lack life. The elaboration may not allow the reader to visualize the events adequately and may not be clear to the reader. Though adequately described, the story may lack the life that vivid writing and expression could give it.

LOW (1 or 2)

The details chosen by the writer do not seem appropriate to the purpose of the paper or to his/her audience. The writer has not appropriately elaborated the events and the writing is lifeless. The expression used by the writer not only is not vivid, but also may be boring and unreal.

Results

High (5-6) - 21.0%
Middle (3-4) - 52.5%
Low (0-2) - 26.5%
Mean 3.39

Seventy-three point five percent (73.5%) of the students scored in the middle and high ranges. This is a weaker area needing improvement.

Interpretation

Choice of details and elaboration of ideas is another area that is weaker. Twenty-six point five percent (26.5%) placed in the low range, 52.5% performed in the middle range, 21.0% scored in the high range. The writers in the high range selected words, phrases and figures of speech so as to make their writing alive and clear to the reader. For the students in the middle range, imagery, figures of speech, descriptive words, and phrases that lend vividness to the writing were generally absent. The details chosen may have been appropriate, but the lack of elaboration of these ideas produced papers that often were stilted or unclear. Many of the papers in the low range were boring and lifeless because of a lack of details.

6. SENTENCE STRUCTURE

No hard and fast rules can be set down for sentence structure. At times, a variety of sentence structures is appropriate to create and maintain reader interest. Sometimes repetitive patterns can create a desired effect. Sometimes, short, choppy sentences are appropriate to the topic and discourse; at other times, long, elegant structures are appropriate.

HIGH (5 or 6)

A positive effect is created by the writer in the use of sentence structures. The writer seems to have control of a variety of structures and employs them effectively in communicating.

MIDDLE (3 or 4)

Although the writer seems to have control of a number of sentence structures, at times the structures are ambiguous or clumsy, or the writer may not have taken advantage of opportunities to create a positive effect in varying or repeating sentence structures.

LOW (1 or 2)

The sentence structures are little more than simple sentences; a small number of structures are repeated throughout the paper so that the paper becomes boring or predictable. The writer seems to have serious difficulties in presenting effectively-constructed sentences.

Results

High (5-6) - 23.2%
Middle (3-4) - 51.4%
Low (0-2) - 25.4%
Mean 3.44

Seventy-four point six percent (74.6%) of the students scored in the middle and high ranges. This indicates that this is a weaker area needing improvement.

Interpretation

Sentence structure caused great difficulties for 25.4% of the students who placed in the low range, and relative difficulty for another 24.7% who scored a 3 out of a possible 6 in this aspect of writing. For these students variety in sentence structure was lacking with simple sentences of natural order (subject/verb) being, by far, the most common. When a complex sentence was attempted, the structure was often ambiguous or clumsy, and many sentences were run-on or fragments. In the high range, 23.2% of the students were able to manipulate a variety of sentences effectively.

7. USAGE

Usage refers to the "correctness" of the structures used by a writer. Difficulties in such areas as verb tense, subject-verb agreement, pronoun reference and the like fall into the area of usage.

HIGH (5 or 6)
The usage is correct and appropriate to the level of presentation of the material.

MIDDLE (3 or 4)
Few usage errors appear and they do not detract from the impact of the discourse.

LOW (1 or 2)
Errors detract substantially from the readability and the impression of the paper.

Results

High	(5-6)	-	27.1%
Middle	(3-4)	-	58.0%
Low	(0-2)	-	14.9%
Mean	3.72		

Interpretation

The results of usage are slightly higher for the narrative writing than for the persuasive piece. Although, the percentages for the middle/high ranges for the narrative are 85.1% and those for the persuasive are 83.8% (a slight difference), there was a shift in percentages from the middle to the high in the narrative piece giving a result of 56.4% of students scoring a 4 or above. In general, errors noted in the persuasive papers were also present in the narratives:

- misuse of the apostrophe in contractions
- confusion with some homonyms
- lack of subject/verb agreement
- lack of clarity in pronouns reference.

Some or many of these errors were found in papers in all ranges of performance.

8. PUNCTUATION AND USE OF CAPITALS

HIGH (5 or 6)

In general, the writer uses capitals and punctuates correctly. Capitals and punctuation are used to make the writing clear and readable.

MIDDLE (3 or 4)

Errors in use of capitals and punctuation may be present but do not perceptibly detract from the clarity and readability of the paper.

LOW (1 or 2)

Errors in use of capitals and punctuation substantially detract from the clarity or readability of the paper.

Results

High (5-6) - 31.5%
Middle (3-4) - 47.0%
Low (0-2) - 21.5%
Mean 3.67

Seventy-eight point five percent (78.5%) of the students scored in the middle and high ranges. This indicates that this area of the students' writing needs improvement.

Interpretation

In this area 78.5% of the students placed in the high/middle ranges. In their papers capitals and punctuation were used effectively to make the writing clear and readable, and errors that did appear did not perceptibly detract from the clarity of the paper. The results were considerably lower in the narrative than in the persuasive writing, but they could be explained by a lack of time to proofread the narrative, as it was, generally, longer. As well, the writers used a greater variety of sentence structures and did not always punctuate correctly.

9. SPELLING

HIGH (5 or 6)
Spelling attracts little or no attention. If errors in mature words do appear, they reflect meaningful "guesses" at the words being used.

MIDDLE (3 or 4)
Few spelling errors appear in the writing, but in general the errors do not detract from the impact or readability of the paper. Most "guesses" are reasonable.

LOW (1 or 2)
Errors in spelling substantially detract from the readability and impression of the paper. The reader must stop and puzzle over words to figure out what they are or what the writer intended.

Results

High	(5-6)	-	34.9%
Middle	(3-4)	-	46.4%
Low	(0-2)	-	18.8%
Mean	3.85		

Eighty-one point three percent (81.3%) of the students scored in the middle and high ranges. This indicates that the students' performance in this area was satisfactory.

Interpretation

The results in spelling were good, with many of the errors reflecting meaningful "guesses" at the words being used, e.g., "labratory", "discusting", or an interference from the students' second language: e.g., "danse, french". The scores, however, were lower for the narrative than for the persuasive writing; 81.3% placed in the middle and high range in the first task, as compared to 89.8% in the second. This was explained by the difference in the purpose of the tasks, their length, and their organization. It was felt that the writers took more risks with the narratives, and that the time constraint, or the habits formed, may have influenced the kind of editing done by the students.

Spelling Test

Students were presented with a list of twenty-four words to spell. The words were spoken in isolation, used in a sentence and finally repeated in isolation for the students.

Word	Percentage of students spelling word correctly	Word	Percentage of students spelling word correctly
1. scientist	91.2%	13. generally	73.5%
2. items	91.2	14. official	74.0
3. companies	80.1	15. eliminate	58.6
4. economy	78.5	16. parliament	26.5
5. describe	76.8	17. necessary	51.4
6. personnel	37.0	18. finally	86.2
7. restaurant	73.5	19. funeral	89.0
8. confusion	89.5	20. wealthy	77.9
9. complain	91.7	21. experiment	80.7
10. temperature	80.1	22. obvious	87.3
11. immigrants	26.0	23. employee	74.6
12. community	77.9	24. deduction	91.7

Mean: 17.65

From this table one notes that the words spelled correctly by most students are words which are spelled the same or nearly the same as in French, e.g., "items, confusion, deduction, scientist (although in some cases this word had an "e" at the ending, suggesting an interference). The word "economy" denoted a certain interference being written "economie" in several cases. "Parliament" and "immigrants" were words with low scores evidencing the same phenomena, "parliament" often being written "parlement" and "immigrants" spelled "emigrants". "Personnel" was often written with only one n or confused with the word "personal". "Eliminate" was the word that evidenced the greatest variety of spellings, e.g., "elimenate", "iliminate", "ilemenate", etc. The distribution table on page 22 of the Preliminary Report for Grade 8 Immersion Schools indicates that 62.6% of the students obtained a score of 75% or more on their test with 13.4% of these students spelling all words correctly or having only one error. Twenty-eight point three percent (28.3%) of the students scored between 50% and 75%, and another 9.1% scored below 50%.

Summary

Results indicate that in persuasive writing 86.1% of the students performed in the middle and high ranges; in narrative writing 84.5% of the students attained the same level of performance. These results indicate that an acceptable percentage of the grade 8 Immersion students present a paper in both genres of writing where the quality of thought and expression is appropriate for the grade level. In all aspects of organization and presentation, a good percentage of papers demonstrated performance that was acceptable for a grade 8 Immersion student. It was felt that these students had a general awareness of the qualities and attributes particular to the the two tasks at hand.

Analytical Scale

Mechanics. The results of spelling show evidence that this area represents a strength in the grade 8 "Immersion" writing. The scores in spelling were good, with many of the errors reflecting "meaningful" guesses at the words being used, e.g., "labratory", "discusting", or an interference from the student's second language, e.g., "danse", "french". The scores, however, were lower for the narrative than for the persuasive writing; 80.3% placed in the middle and high ranges in the first task, as compared to 89.8% in the second. This was explained by the difference in the purpose of the tasks, their length, and their organization. It was felt that writers took more risks with the narratives, and that the time constraint, or the habits formed, may have influenced the kind of editing done by the students.

In the spelling test it was noted that the words spelled correctly by most students are words which are spelled the same or nearly the same as in French, e.g., "items, confusion, deduction, scientist" (although in some cases this word had an "e" at the end suggesting an interference). The word "economy" denoted a certain interference being written "economie" in several cases. "Parliament" and "immigrants" were words with low scores evidencing the same phenomenon, "parliament" often being written "parlement", and "immigrants" spelled "emigrants". "Personnel" was often written with one "n" or confused with the word "personal". "Eliminate" was the word that evidenced the greatest variety of spellings, e.g., "elimenate, iliminate, ilemenate", etc. The distribution table on page 22 of the Preliminary Report, Grade 8 Immersion Schools, indicates that 62.6% of the students obtained a score of 75% or more on their test with 13.4% of these students spelling all words correctly or having only one error. Twenty-eight point three percent (28.3%) of the students scored between 50% and 75%, and another 9.1% scored below 50%.

Punctuation and the Use of Capitals was also high with 86.1% of the students scoring a 3 or above in persuasive writing. The results were considerably lower in the narrative writing, with 78.5% scoring in the middle/high ranges, but this could be explained by a lack of time to proofread the narrative, as it was, generally, longer. In these papers capitals and punctuation were used effectively to make the writing clear and readable and errors that did appear did not perceptibly detract from the clarity of the paper. The most commonly noted error was the incorrect use of the comma. Dialogue was used effectively by the better writers.

The results in the area of usage indicate that many elements of this area are already in place. The percentages for the middle/high ranges for both tasks are very similar (83.8% for persuasive, 83.1% for narrative). However, a greater percentage of the students placed in the high range for narrative (27.1%) than for persuasive (8.0%) indicating that many top students did better in this area when writing narratives. Errors noted were present in both pieces of writing:

- misuse of the apostrophe in contractions
- confusion of some homonyms
- lack of subject/verb agreement
- lack of clarity in pronoun reference.

Wording and Style. This area represents a strength for many students with 87.1% placing in the high/middle ranges for persuasive, and 82.3% attaining the same performance in the narrative. Again, one noted a strong high for the narrative piece (24.3%), which indicated that these students were able to manipulate words, and vary their sentences as to length and structure when appropriate, in order to present a piece of writing that was engaging and interesting. In the persuasive task, some papers revealed an unawareness that written language cannot be manipulated like oral language, others placed emphasis on content rather than communication. Often the vocabulary used was too general for this type of writing, and there was a lack of expressive verbs. For many of the students, although the narrative task was appropriate for their level, it did not seem to inspire them. Some students experienced difficulties in expressing their thoughts in a fluid style through the use of a precise, colourful vocabulary. However, a good number of the writers reflected a sensitivity to the audience being addressed.

Sentence Structure. In the area of sentence structure, 80.6% of the students placed in the high/middle ranges for persuasive writing indicating ability on the part of the writers to control a variety of sentence structures and to employ them effectively in communicating. The numbers were relatively lower in narrative writing with only 74.6% of the students performing at this level. For those writers placing in the low range, variety in sentence structure was lacking, with simple sentences of natural order (subject/verb) being, by far, the most common. When a complex sentence was attempted, the structure was often ambiguous or clumsy, and many sentences were run-on or fragments.

Organization and Sequence. For both pieces of writing, four out of five students performed at the level of expectancy for their grade level in organization and sequence (79.5% for middle/high ranges in persuasive, 81.8% for middle/high ranges in narrative). For these students, the papers were generally well organized, the introduction caught the interest of the reader, the organization followed a logical sequence, and the closing was effective in that it led the reader to feel the paper was complete. However, for the other 20% of the students, difficulties were encountered in persuasive writing in the sequential and logical presentation of points, and in the categorization of arguments that belonged together in the same paragraph. In the narratives, necessary background information was often lacking, and transition phrases were not used to aid the reader in following the events. In many cases, conclusions were sketchy and not summative, lacked a "wrap-up" element, and left the reader with little or no sense of closure.

Focus. In this area of writing, 17.8% of the students placed in the high range in persuasive writing indicating they had a good grasp of topic and developed each of the elements in the essay so that it directly related to the topic. The writers in the middle range (58.1%) also had a theme holding each of the paper's elements together. Although some unrelated information or opinion may have been interjected at the conclusion, the reader felt that he/she had been convinced by the argument provided. In the low range many of the elements were unrelated to the topic. Information, details, opinions had been added without any concern as to how they supported the argument or explanation. In the narratives, many of the students were able to present a well-focused piece. Thirty point nine percent (30.9%) scored in the high range: 46.4% scored in the middle range with 20.4% of these writers scoring a 4. This represents a group of 50.5% of the students who scored a 4 or better in this area. These results indicate that many writers had a central focus for their paper and chose details because they related to the theme.

Ideas. In persuasive writing the area of ideas was identified as being one of the weaker ones with 31.2% scoring in the low range. Twelve point four percent (12.4%) performed in the high range and 56.4% in the middle. Many of the ideas in the papers were generally sound, but did not reflect a creative or unique point of view in dealing with the topic. In narrative writing, 76.8% of the students placed in the high and middle ranges in this area. These writers were able to choose meaningful ideas that related to the given topic and develop them in a unique way. For the others, originality and creativity of thinking were lacking and little attempt was made to employ humour or appropriate figures of speech. It was generally felt that, although uniqueness and creativity may be difficult to teach, a greater variety and number of pre-writing activities would greatly improve this area.

Choice of Details/Elaboration of Ideas. With 35.4% of the students performing in the low range in details and elaboration of ideas for persuasive writing, it was felt that this area of writing would need more attention. Difficulties in sequential and logical presentation were apparent and many times the writer was not able to support his/her point with substantial and meaningful information. In the narratives, while 21.0% scored in the high range, 52.5% performed in the middle range, and 26.5% placed in the low range. In many papers, imagery, figures of speech, descriptive words, and phrases that lend vividness to the writing were generally absent. The details chosen may have been appropriate, but the lack of elaboration of these ideas produced papers that often were stilted and unreal. Poor elaboration of inadequate details and examples may be a reflection of shortcomings in pre-writing preparation. Revision activities (especially group and peer) of different kinds would also help in the selection of appropriate details and in the clarity of their elaboration.

Overview

To sum up, GIM results show that an acceptable percentage of the grade 8 Immersion students can write a paper, either persuasive or narrative, where the quality of thought and effectiveness of overall organization and presentation is appropriate for the grade 8 level or better.

The analytical scale shows strengths in spelling, punctuation and capitals, wording and style, usage, and focus in narrative writing. Organization and sequence, focus or theme, and sentence structure in persuasive writing were judged to be adequate in spite of certain weaknesses. Areas which need to be strengthened are those of ideas, details, and elaboration of ideas.

CHAPTER 5

Grade 11 Results

The grade 11 test consisted of two writing tasks and a short spelling test.

PART I - Process Writing
PART II - Essay Writing
PART III - A spelling test of 20 words

PART I: The Process Writing assignment required students to write a lively, knowledgeable piece explaining how something is done or organized.

Students were given 45 minutes in which to prepare a rough draft and to rewrite the final copy.

PART II: In the Essay Writing task students were asked to write an essay, two to four pages long, following their reading of an article on parent-child relationships.

In the essay the student had to present a personal view as to what the nature of the relationship should be between a sixteen-year-old and his or her family.

Two sessions were allotted to this task. The first session of 45 minutes allowed students to read and discuss the article in small groups and prepare a first draft. In the second session they were given 50 minutes to revise, edit, and write their final drafts.

PART III: The spelling test of twenty (20) words was an assessment of students' ability to spell grade-level words.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS 200

PROCESS WRITING

	LOW	MIDDLE	HIGH	MEAN
GIM	5.8%	71.8%	22.4%	7.19
1. Organization and Sequence	13.5	63.4	23.1	3.62
2. Wording and Style	10.9	73.7	15.4	3.52
3. Focus or Theme	9.6	66.0	24.4	3.75
4. Ideas	16.7	66.0	17.3	3.40
5. Detail/Elaboration	17.9	67.4	14.7	3.33
6. Sentence Structure	17.3	68.6	14.1	3.44
7. Usage	14.7	68.6	16.7	3.48
8. Punctuation/Capitals	11.5	57.7	30.8	3.83
9. Spelling	9.0	48.1	42.9	4.12

ESSAY WRITING

	LOW	MIDDLE	HIGH	MEAN
GIM	7.9%	64.9%	27.2%	7.22
1. Organization and Sequence	21.9	57.6	21.9	3.48
2. Wording and Style	9.3	76.1	14.6	3.53
3. Focus or Theme	23.2	50.3	23.2	3.40
4. Ideas	19.9	63.5	15.9	3.42
5. Detail/Elaboration	17.2	60.9	17.2	3.36
6. Sentence Structure	17.9	65.5	17.9	3.54
7. Usage	17.2	64.9	17.2	3.48
8. Punctuation/Capitals	4.6	57.0	38.4	4.13
9. Spelling	12.5	46.3	41.1	4.05

NOTE: The number of French Immersion students tested in English 200 was 158.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS 201

PROCESS WRITING

	LOW	MIDDLE	HIGH	MEAN
GIM	8.6%	71.5%	0.0%	5.86
1. Organization and Sequence	14.3	71.5	14.3	3.43
2. Wording and Style	14.3	85.8	0.0	3.14
3. Focus or Theme	14.3	85.7	0.0	3.43
4. Ideas	14.3	71.5	14.3	3.43
5. Detail/Elaboration	14.3	85.8	0.0	3.14
6. Sentence Structure	28.6	71.5	0.0	2.86
7. Usage	14.3	85.7	0.0	3.00
8. Punctuation/Capitals	14.3	85.7	0.0	3.29
9. Spelling	28.6	57.2	14.3	3.43

ESSAY WRITING

	LOW	MIDDLE	HIGH	MEAN
GIM	28.6%	71.5%	0.0%	5.43
1. Organization and Sequence	28.6	42.9	28.6	3.29
2. Wording and Style	28.6	71.5	0.0	2.86
3. Focus or Theme	28.6	57.2	14.3	2.86
4. Ideas	42.9	42.9	14.3	2.86
5. Detail/Elaboration	42.9	28.6	28.6	3.00
6. Sentence Structure	14.3	71.4	14.3	3.14
7. Usage	14.3	57.2	28.6	3.43
8. Punctuation/Capitals	28.6	28.6	42.9	3.71
9. Spelling	28.6	42.9	28.6	3.57

NOTE: **The number of French Immersion students tested in English 201 was 7. Because of the small number of students, no separate analysis is done on the results of this group.**

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS 200 & 201 COMBINED

PROCESS WRITING

	LOW	MIDDLE	HIGH	MEAN
GIM	6.3%	70.3%	23.4%	7.21
1. Organization and Sequence	12.6	64.0	23.4	3.65
2. Wording and Style	10.3	74.3	15.4	3.53
3. Focus or Theme	9.7	66.3	24.0	3.75
4. Ideas	15.4	66.3	18.3	3.42
5. Detail/Elaboration	17.1	68.0	14.9	3.36
6. Sentence Structure	16.6	68.5	14.9	3.46
7. Usage	13.7	68.6	17.7	3.51
8. Punctuation/Capitals	10.9	57.1	32.0	3.86
9. Spelling	9.1	46.9	44.0	4.15

ESSAY WRITING

	LOW	MIDDLE	HIGH	MEAN
GIM	8.9%	62.7%	28.4%	7.25
1. Organization and Sequence	19.5	56.8	23.7	3.51
2. Wording and Style	9.5	76.3	14.2	3.53
3. Focus or Theme	24.9	52.0	23.1	3.42
4. Ideas	20.7	61.0	18.3	3.45
5. Detail/Elaboration	22.5	59.2	18.3	3.37
6. Sentence Structure	15.4	65.1	19.5	3.58
7. Usage	16.6	64.5	18.9	3.52
8. Punctuation/Capitals	5.3	54.5	40.2	4.15
9. Spelling	13.0	45.0	42.0	4.07

NOTE: The combined sample totalled 177. This is greater than the sum of the sample sizes on the preceding two pages because 12 students failed to indicate which course they were enrolled in.

The 1988 Grade 11 Writing Assessment test was administered throughout the province during the first two weeks of May, 1988. All students enrolled in the English 200 and English 201 in Immersion schools were tested. The returned samples totalled 177 test papers. Of this number 158 were enrolled in English 200 and 7 were enrolled in English 201, while the remaining 12 did not indicate which course they were taking.

Results are given for the three groups; 200 & 201 (combined), 200, and 201. However, because of the small number of participants in 201 (7), and the resulting impossibility of reaching any valid conclusions, these results will not be analyzed separately.

Two tasks were proposed to the students. The first was a piece of process writing whose purpose was to explain a procedure, i.e., how to do something. The second was an opinion essay whose purpose was to persuade the audience of the validity of an adopted point of view.

General Impression Marking

General Impression Marking is a judgement about the overall quality of a student's writing given the purpose of the writing and the audience to which it is addressed.

The GIM scale attempts to rate compositions in a general, global manner. Areas covered include the quality of thought evident in the paper, the effectiveness of the overall organization, the effectiveness of the overall presentation, and the effectiveness of style and word choice. Both tasks, process writing and essay writing, were rated twice on a scale of 0 - 6 by two different markers. The two scores were then combined for a score on 12.

Samples scoring in the high range showed evidence of the following qualities:

HIGH (5 or 6): The paper has evidence of sound thinking on the part of the writer. The quality of thought reflects a mature point of view. The organization of the paper indicates careful planning and thinking on the part of the writer, and the paper is presented in an effective, meaningful fashion. The style is appropriate to the level of thought and organization of the paper, and the word choice and use reflect a mature, sophisticated grasp of language and language use. The level of the paper is appropriate for the audience being addressed (in this case, a student's classmates) and fulfills the identified purpose.

Results

	Combined Results of 200 & 201	Results 200
Process Writing	23.4%	22.4%
Essay Writing	28.4%	27.2%

Samples scoring in the middle range showed evidence of the following qualities:

MIDDLE (3 or 4): The thinking of the writer seems appropriate to the grade level of the student but reflects a level of maturity less than adult-like. The organization of the paper is generally appropriate, though the writer might have been more careful in planning and carrying out an organizational pattern. The thinking, for the most part, is meaningful, but at times the paper may wander from the central thrust or movement. The style, though generally appropriate to the level of thought and organization of the paper, may reflect some inconsistencies or repetitions to the point of being distracting. Word choice reflects the level and maturity of the student but may not always be appropriate to the audience to which the paper is addressed. In general the paper achieves its identified purpose, but it may wander or not take advantage of obvious opportunities in achieving that purpose.

Results

	Combined Results of 200 & 201	Results 200
Process Writing	70.3%	71.8%
Essay Writing	62.7%	64.9%

Samples scoring in the low range showed evidence of the following qualities:

LOW (1 or 2): The thinking that is evident in the paper seems inconsistent and immature, reflecting an identifiably egocentric point of view. The organization of the paper is difficult to follow and does not reflect any careful planning or any meaningful organizational pattern. The thrust or movement of the paper is interrupted by wandering discourse, unnecessary asides, or inappropriate information. The style is inconsistent and immature, and repetitive or uninteresting structures are consistently used. Word choice is inappropriate, distracting, and shallow. The writer seems to have little consideration for the audience or reader and does not consistently address himself/herself to the identified purpose of the paper.

Results

	Combined Results of 200 + 201	Results 200
Process Writing	6.3%	5.8%
Essay Writing	8.9%	7.9%

Mean

Process Writing	7.21	7.19
Essay Writing	7.25	7.22

It was felt that these results generally reflected the expected performance of the identified population when results from the 200's and 201's are combined, with 1 out of 4 students performing at the high level (23.4% - 28.4%) and another two-thirds of the students placing in the middle range

(70.3% - 62.7%). Figures indicate that a good majority of students place in the middle range.

Analytical Scale

In the following pages, each area of the analytical scale will be analyzed separately. The criteria for judging the different skills are the same for both tasks, process writing and essay writing, except for the area of organization and sequence. Therefore, all areas will be given one interpretation, whereas organization and sequence will receive two, one for each task.

PROCESS WRITING

1. ORGANIZATION AND SEQUENCE (for process writing)

In process writing, the organization or sequence should generally follow the steps of the process itself, usually, though not always, in a temporal (time) sequence. The organization for the paper should effectively introduce the process in general, lead the reader clearly through the steps of the process, then effectively come to closure at the end.

HIGH (5 or 6): The writer has an effective opening that catches the interest of the reader. The organization closely and clearly follows the steps in the process. If sub-processes are explained, the writer has cued the reader for these sub-areas and clearly identifies the steps of each. Effective transitions from one step to another are used to cue the reader. The closing is effective in that it leads the reader to feel that the process is complete and has usually some general information about the process as a whole or its importance.

MIDDLE (3 or 4): The writer generally introduces the process but does not catch the interest of the reader, or she/he begins the description of the process without an introduction. Generally, all of the steps of the process are present and in the appropriate order, but the writer may not have the steps clearly laid out or may not employ transitions that aid the reader in following the process. The paper may have a weak ending or may leave the reader with little or no sense of closure.

LOW (1 or 2): The writer has not attempted to catch the interest of the reader in his/her opening. The steps of the process are confused or ordered so inappropriately that the reader cannot follow the process. Transition phrases are not used to aid the reader in effectively following the steps, and the reader is left with little or no feeling of closure or completeness at the end of the paper. The entire paper may leave the reader confused about the process itself or of its importance.

Results

	Combined Results 200 & 201	Results 200
High	23.4%	23.1%
Middle	64.0%	63.4%
Low	12.6	13.5
Mean	3.65	

Eighty-seven point four percent (87.4%) of the students (200 + 201) scored in the high and middle ranges in this area. This indicates that organization and sequence in process writing is a strength in these students' writing.

Interpretation

The students in the high range (23.4% - 200 + 201) showed competent organization in process writing. The writers had an effective opening that caught the interest of the reader; transitions were present, and the closing lead one to feel that the process was complete. In the middle range (64.0% - 200 +201), generally all the steps of the process were in order, but many students tended to write a series of one or two line paragraphs with little concept of topic sentence and with an ineffective use or absence of transition phrases. The students in the low range (12.6% - 200 + 201) presented papers devoid of the qualities that make for a well-organized presentation.

ESSAY WRITING

1. ORGANIZATION AND SEQUENCE (for personal opinion essay)

In personal opinion writing, the organization should follow a logical, usually causal, sequence. The essay should indicate that the topic has been effectively introduced, the major points should follow one another logically, and the paper should come to an effective close or conclusion. Organization and sequence is probably most evident in the major topics and in the concluding paragraph.

HIGH (5 or 6): The writer has written an effective opening that will catch the interest of the reader. The organization follows a logical sequence. The closing is effective in that it leads the reader to feel that the paper will be complete and brings the essay to a conclusion.

MIDDLE (3 or 4): The writer generally introduces the subject but does nothing to catch the interest of the reader. Although all the points presented may be valid or logical arguments, they do not seem ordered in the most effective manner. The paper may have a weak ending or may leave the reader with little or no sense of closure.

LOW (1 or 2): The essay does not reflect an effective opening and the major points in the paper are not logical or valid. The sequence of major topics does not seem to follow any logical pattern. The conclusion leaves the reader with little or no sense of closure. The entire essay leaves the reader confused about the arguments or their importance.

Results

Essay Writing	Combined Results	Results
	200 & 201	200
High	23.7%	21.9%
Middle	56.8%	57.6%
Low	19.5%	21.9%
Mean	3.51	3.48

Eighty point five percent (80.5%) of the students (200 + 201 combined) scored in the high and middle ranges in this area. This indicates satisfactory performance by these students in organization/sequence in essay writing.

Interpretation

The students in the high range (23.7% - 200 + 201) presented essays that followed a logical sequence. Both the opening and closing of the papers were effective. For the students in the middle range (56.8% - 200 + 201), essays denoted several weaknesses. Many papers failed to introduce the central idea or thesis in a clear opening paragraph that caught the interest of the reader and set the direction for the essay. Deficiencies were noted in topic sentences. In many cases, conclusions were little more than one-line paragraphs which left the reader confused about the importance of the arguments presented. Another weakness noted frequently was the absence of a line of logic being developed by the writers. Coherence may have been present in a cluster of two or three sentences but this inter-connectedness did not extend from paragraph to paragraph or from one section of the paper to another. The essays written by the students in the low range (19.5%) showed very little or no evidence of the qualities that make for a well laid-out essay.

In general, results for organization/sequence were better for process writing than for essay writing, probably because this type of writing lends itself better to sequential organization.

2. WORDING AND STYLE (for essay writing and process writing)

Wording refers to the choice of vocabulary the writer makes in the paper. Style refers to the ways in which those words are strung together in phrases, sentences, or longer thought-units. Word choice needs to reflect both precision and maturity, as well as appropriateness to the audience being addressed. The writer should be aware of the level of his/her audience and explain words used in a highly specific or technical manner. The writer should also strive for an interesting, engaging style, one that is both easy to read and understand, and interesting and varied in structure and length. Both wording and style need to be clean and clearly understandable.

HIGH (5 or 6): The words chosen by the writer reflect sensitivity to the audience being addressed. The words are precise and exact, with clear reference. The style is interesting, sentences are varied as to length and structure when appropriate, and the structures are clear and easy to read and understand. The style is engaging, and the words help the reader clearly "see" and understand the process or series of events.

MIDDLE (3 or 4): The words chosen by the writer may have appropriate referents, but they do not reflect a sensitivity to the reader/audience. The emphasis seems to be on the content, rather than on the communication. When technical or specific words are used, they are not well-explained or defined. The style is repetitive to the point of being noticeable, or inappropriately long or short sentences interfere with the ease of reading. Though correctly used, vocabulary may be too general for the type of writing.

LOW (1 or 2): The writer seems to have no sense of audience whatsoever. Words or phrases chosen may not aid the reader in understanding the process or events and may interfere with comprehension. Sentences are either too long to be read with ease, or too short to create a flow. The words and style seem colourless, non-engaging, uninteresting.

Results

Process Writing

	Combined Results 200 & 201	Results 200
High	15.4%	23.1%
Middle	74.3%	63.4%
Low	10.3%	13.5%
Mean	3.53	3.62

Essay Writing

	200 & 201	200
High	14.2%	14.2%
Middle	76.3%	76.3%
Low	9.5%	9.5%
Mean	3.53	3.53

Eighty-nine point seven percent (89.7%) (process writing) and 90.5% (essay writing) of the students (200 + 201 combined results), performed in the high and middle ranges in this area. These results indicated that wording and style is a strength in these students' writing.

Interpretation

For the students scoring in the high range (15.4% and 14.2% - 200 + 201) the words chosen were precise, exact, and reflected sensitivity to the audience being addressed. The style was engaging, length and structure of sentences were varied, and the paper was easy to read and understand. In the middle range (74.3% - 76.3% (200 + 201)), many of the above qualities were present in the writing. However, in some instances, students had many ideas on the topic but not sufficient language skills to express them in a lively fashion. Thoughts were sometimes written in awkward form, indicating a need to improve students' awareness of precise syntax. In the low range, words and phrases chosen seemed colourless, uninteresting, or too general or ambiguous. Many writers had not internalized a sense of audience, and their papers did not reveal a sensitivity to the reader.

In process writing, instructions to students asked for lively writing. It was found that generally samples were not lively, although some students did attempt to meet this criterion by being facetious in their writing. Perhaps, as noted by some markers, the nature of process writing makes it difficult to establish whether to credit clear, concise writing or more unusual, creative pieces. This is the area where most students scored in the middle range (74.3% - 76.3%) indicating an evident thrust in reaching one of the grade 11 program objectives, that of developing "style".

3. FOCUS OR THEME (for essay writing and process writing)

The writer chooses aspects, incidents, and details because they relate to the purpose of the writing. She/he seems to have a central focus and maintains it throughout the piece. There seems to be a theme holding each of the paper's elements together.

HIGH (5 OR 6): The writer clearly has a central focus for the paper and develops each of the elements within the paper so that it directly relates to that central focus. The purpose of the paper is clearly discernible. The writer does not present information, opinions, or details that do not relate to the central purpose of the paper. At the conclusion, the reader feels as if the events or process has been sufficiently covered without undue reference to unimportant or unrelated material.

MIDDLE (3 or 4): The writer has a central focus for the paper, but the relationship of each of the elements within the paper is not clearly related to the focus. The purpose of the paper is not always clearly identifiable and, at times, the writer interjects information, opinions, or details that do not relate to the central focus. These intrusions, however, do not seriously interfere with the thrust or movement. At the conclusion, the reader feels as if the events or process have been covered, but that the movement of the paper has been interrupted along the way by unnecessary, incomplete, or unrelated elements.

LOW (1 or 2): The paper does not seem to have a central focus or thematic movement. Elements within the paper seem unrelated to any central purpose. Information, opinions, and details seem to be added with little concern as to how they relate to the description of the process or the flow of events. At the conclusion, the reader is likely to wonder what the main point or purpose of the essay was.

Results - Process Writing

	200 & 201	200
High	24.0%	24.4%
Middle	66.3%	66.0%
Low	9.7%	9.6%
Mean	3.75	3.75

Results - Essay Writing

	200 & 201	200
High	23.1%	23.2%
Middle	52.0%	53.3%
Low	24.9%	23.5%
Mean	3.42	3.40

Ninety point three percent (90.3%) of the students performed in the high/middle ranges in this area for process writing. This indicates that focus and theme is a strength in these students' writing. Seventy-five point one percent (75.1%) of the students scored in the high/middle ranges in this area for essay writing, indicating a need for improvement in focus and theme for this type of writing.

Interpretation

The results in this area indicate that writers were better able to stay on task for process writing than for essay writing. For the students performing in the high range, the focus of the paper (for each genre), was clearly discernible and all details, information and opinions related to the central purpose of the paper. For the papers scoring in the middle range, in many cases, the direction established in the introduction was forgotten during the development of the writing. The assigned task in the essay was to write an opinion essay in order to persuade the audience of the validity of an adopted point of view. Many writers, having set themselves up well in the first paragraph, by the middle of the essay, lost sight of their direction and strayed off topic. This became even more obvious when the students forgot to include a title. In many cases, the writing became a narrative piece as students described personal experiences which took up too much of their essay and strayed from the purpose and spoiled the structure.

4. IDEAS (for essay writing and process writing)

The ideas presented in a paper reflect the quality, uniqueness, and creativity of the thinking involved in the development of the paper. The selection of the topic, the choice of point of view, the selection and shaping of details are all involved in the presentation and development of the ideas.

HIGH (5 or 6): The writer has selected an interesting, engaging topic, has selected appropriate and meaningful ideas to discuss and describe, and may have dealt with the topic in a unique, creative fashion. Humour, interesting figures of speech, or the like, may be used or attempted in describing the process or relating events. An interesting point of view may have been selected.

MIDDLE (3 or 4): Though the ideas presented in the paper are generally sound, they do not reflect a unique or creative point of view in dealing with the topic. No attempt has been made to employ humour, interesting figures of speech, comparisons, or the like in order to make the paper more interesting or lively.

LOW (1 or 2): The ideas presented do not reflect sound or creative thinking. Not only is the paper lifeless, but the ideas do not congeal as a whole and seem to reflect mental wandering rather than logical or creative thinking.

Results - Process Writing

	200 & 201	200
High	18.3%	17.3%
Middle	66.3%	66.0%
Low	15.4%	16.7%
Mean	3.42	3.40

Results - Essay Writing

	200 & 201	200
High	18.3%	15.9%
Middle	61.0%	63.5%
Low	20.7%	19.9%
Mean	3.45	3.42

Eighty-four point six percent (84.6%) (200 + 201) scored in the high/middle ranges in this area for process writing, which indicates satisfactory performance in ideas for this type of writing. Seventy-nine point three percent (79.3%) scored in the high/middle ranges for essay writing, indicating some need for improvement.

Interpretation

Writers in general obtained a better score, in this area, in process writing than they did in essay writing. For the students in the high range, process writing seemed to generate a greater variety of responses which appeared to be more interesting; several pieces contained humour thus bringing occasional comic relief to the marker. It was generally felt that the two writing tasks did not provide scope for the students' creativity and originality. For the papers in the middle range, the essay topic produced surprisingly conventional content. Many students adopted an essentially egocentric point of view, preferring the safe route to risk-taking, and presenting the acceptable or obvious in cliché form.

5. CHOICE OF DETAILS AND ELABORATION OF IDEAS (for essay writing and process writing)

The details chosen by a writer, how particular ideas within a paper have been elaborated, and how real and vivid the writing is can make the difference between a listless, lifeless paper and an exciting, engaging paper.

HIGH (5 or 6): The details chosen by the writer are appropriate to the description of the process or the telling of the story and are elaborated in such a manner as to be interesting to the reader without getting carried away. The words, phrases, imagery, figures of speech, etc. seem to have been selected and presented in such a manner as to make the process, events, or description alive, real to the reader, and clear.

MIDDLE (3 or 4): The details chosen seem appropriate to the description or story but, at times, the writing seems to lack life. The elaboration may not allow the reader to visualize the process or events adequately and may not be clear to the reader. Though adequately described, the process or story may lack the life that vivid writing and expression could give it.

LOW (1 or 2): The details chosen by the writer do not seem appropriate to the purpose of the paper or to his/her audience. The writer has not appropriately elaborated the process or events and the writing is lifeless. The expression used by the writer not only is not vivid, but also may be boring and unreal.

Results - Process Writing

	200 & 201	200
High	14.9%	14.7%
Middle	68.0%	67.4%
Low	17.1%	17.9%
Mean	3.36	3.33

Results - Essay Writing

	200 & 201	200
High	18.3%	19.2%
Middle	59.2%	60.9%
Low	22.5%	19.9%
Mean	3.37	3.36

Eighty-two point nine percent (82.9%) of the students (200 + 201) scored in the high/middle ranges in this area for process writing, indicating a satisfactory performance on the part of the students.

In essay writing, 77.5% (200 + 201) scored in the same ranges indicating a need for improvement in this area.

Interpretation

Students in the high range chose details that were appropriate to the description; words, phrases, imagery, figures of speech were presented and used to convey ideas that gave life to the writing. For those papers in the middle ranges, content in both pieces was too general. Little use was made of detail, images, or explanations and, as a result, the writings were dull and mediocre. Although ideas and elaboration of these are closely related, some inconsistency was noted. Certain students whose ideas rated only a 2 developed these ideas with considerable thoroughness, while others with unusual and original ideas neglected to develop them into vivid, descriptive products.

6. SENTENCE STRUCTURE (for essay writing and process writing)

No hard and fast rules can be set down for sentence structure. At times, a variety of sentence structures is appropriate to create and maintain reader interest. Sometimes repetitive patterns can create a desired effect. Sometimes, short, choppy sentences are appropriate to the topic and discourse; at other times, long, elegant structures are appropriate.

HIGH (5 or 6): A positive effect is created by the writer in the use of sentence structures. The writer seems to have control of a variety of structures and employs them effectively in communicating.

MIDDLE (3 or 4): Although the writer seems to have control of a number of sentence structures, at times the structures are ambiguous or clumsy, or the writer may not have taken advantage of opportunities to create a positive effect in varying or repeating sentence structures.

LOW (1 or 2): The sentence structures are little more than simple sentences; a small number of structures are repeated throughout the paper so that the paper becomes boring or predictable. The writer seems to have serious difficulties in presenting effectively constructed sentences.

Results - Process Writing

	200 & 201	200
High	14.9%	14.1%
Middle	68.5%	68.6%
Low	16.6%	17.3%
Mean	3.46	3.44

Results - Essay Writing

	200 & 201	200
High	19.5%	17.9%
Middle	65.1%	65.5%
Low	15.4%	17.9%
Mean	3.58	3.54

Eighty-three point four percent (process writing) and 84.6% (essay writing) of the students (200 + 201) scored in the middle/high ranges in this area. This indicates satisfactory performance on the part of these students in both genres of writing.

Interpretation

The results on this item indicate that the combined group, nearly one out of five students (19.5%) scored in the high range and were able to manipulate a variety of sentence structures effectively in essay writing. The percentage is a bit lower in process writing (14.9%). The papers in the middle range lacked variation in sentence structure; the students seemed unwilling to take chances with this aspect of writing. For those performing at the lower level, too many simple sentences were present, with the compound/complex type appearing infrequently. Furthermore, run-on sentences or sentence fragments were common.

7. USAGE (for essay writing and process writing)

Usage refers to the "correctness" of the structures used by a writer. Difficulties in such areas as verb tense, subject/verb agreement, pronoun reference, and the like fall into the area of usage.

HIGH (5 or 6): The usage is correct and appropriate to the level of presentation of the material.

MIDDLE (3 or 4): Few usage errors appear and they do not detract from the impact of the discourse.

LOW (1 or 2): Errors detract substantially from the readability and the impression of the paper.

Results - Process Writing

	200 & 201	200
High	17.7%	16.7%
Middle	68.6%	68.6%
Low	13.7%	14.7%
Mean	3.51	3.48

Results - Essay Writing

	200 & 201	200
High	18.9%	17.2%
Middle	64.5%	64.9%
Low	16.6%	17.2%
Mean	3.52	3.48

In process writing, 86.3% of the students (200 + 201) scored in the high/middle ranges in usage, indicating that this area is a strength in this genre of writing. Eighty-three point four percent (83.4%) scored in the high/middle ranges in essay writing, indicating satisfactory performance on the part of these students.

Interpretation

In this area students did slightly better in process writing than in essay writing. This may have been due to the difference in the assigned tasks.

It was noted that even in some well organized, focused pieces some of the following errors were present:

- incorrect use of future, future perfect tenses
- faulty pronoun reference
- misuse of apostrophes in possessives
- lack of passive voice
- lack of objectivity in writing demonstrated by the use of "you".

8. PUNCTUATION AND USE OF CAPITALS (for essay writing and process writing)

HIGH (5 or 6): In general, the writer uses capitals and punctuates correctly. Capitals and punctuation are used to make the writing clear and readable.

MIDDLE (3 or 4): Errors in use of capitals and punctuation may be present but do not perceptibly detract from the clarity or readability of the paper.

LOW (1 or 2): Errors in use of capitals and punctuation substantially detract from the clarity or readability of the paper.

Results - Process Writing

	200 & 201	200
High	32.0%	30.8%
Middle	57.1%	57.7%
Low	10.9%	11.5%
Mean	3.86	3.83

Results - Essay Writing

	200 & 201	200
High	40.2%	38.4%
Middle	54.5%	57.0%
Low	5.3%	4.6%
Mean	4.15	4.13

Eighty-nine point one percent (89.1%) (process writing) and 94.7% (essay writing) of the students (200 + 201) performed in the high/middle ranges for this area. This indicates that punctuation and capitalization is a strength in these students' writing.

Interpretation

This is an area that showed a definite strength in both pieces of writing for the combined group.

It was noted that the use of colons and semi-colons was generally poor, or in many instances, non-existent. Comma errors were also present, although not as frequent.

9. SPELLING (for essay writing and process writing)

HIGH (5 or 6): Spelling attracts little or no attention. If errors in mature words do appear, they reflect meaningful "guesses" at the words being used.

MIDDLE (3 or 4): Few spelling errors appear in the writing, but in general the errors do not detract from the impact or readability of the paper. Most "guesses" are reasonable.

LOW (1 or 2): Errors in spelling substantially detract from the readability and impression of the paper. The reader must stop and puzzle over words to figure out what they are or what the writer intended.

Results - Process Writing

	200 & 201	200
High	44.0%	42.9%
Middle	46.9%	48.1%
Low	9.1%	9.0%
Mean	4.15	4.12

Results - Essay Writing

	200 & 201	200
High	42.0%	41.1%
Middle	45.0%	46.3%
Low	13.0%	12.5%
Mean	4.07	4.05

Ninety point nine percent (90.9%) (process writing) and 87.0% (essay writing) of the students (200 + 201) scored in the high/middle ranges indicating that spelling is a strength for these students.

Interpretation

Students performed very well in spelling with 90.9% and 87.0% of the students scoring in the high/middle range for process writing, and 83.0% placing in the high/middle ranges.

Examples of some common errors noted were "recieve", with a reversal of the "i" and "e", "responsability" with an "a" instead of an "i", and "a lot" written as one word. Other errors denoted an interference from their second language.

Spelling Results

Students were presented with a list of twenty words to spell. The words were spoken in isolation, used in a sentence, and finally repeated in isolation for the students.

English 200 & 201 Combined

Word	Percentage of students spelling word correctly	Word	Percentage of students spelling word correctly
1. tongue	90.5%	11. development	64.5%
2. library	97.6	12. restaurant	88.2
3. quotation	98.8	13. ineligible	45.0
4. environment	81.1	14. misspell	65.7
5. thoughtful	94.1	15. complaints	96.4
6. occurred	46.2	16. mosquito	78.1
7. insincerely	66.9	17. basically	86.4
8. remembrance	59.8	18. grudge	94.7
9. facilitate	78.7	19. prejudicious	50.9
10. diagnostic	87.6	20. parliament	33.7

Mean - 15.05

English 200

Word	Percentage of students spelling word correctly	Word	Percentage of students spelling word correctly
1. tongue	91.3%	11. development	60.7%
2. library	98.0	12. restaurant	87.3
3. quotation	99.3	13. ineligible	43.3
4. environment	80.7	14. misspell	64.7
5. thoughtful	94.0	15. complaints	96.7
6. occurred	46.7	16. mosquito	76.7
7. insincerely	65.5	17. basically	86.7
8. remembrance	59.3	18. grudge	96.0
9. facilitate	78.7	19. prejudicious	50.7
10. diagnostic	87.3	20. parliament	32.0

Mean - 14.95

On examining the samples, one notes no definite trend in the most common errors save for the following exceptions: the word "occurred" was spelled with one "r" in a great number of cases, the words "development" and "environment" denoted an interference from the second language. "Parliament", "prejudicious", and "ineligible" evidenced the greatest variety of spellings

The distribution table on page 38 of the Preliminary Report, Grade 11 French Immersion Schools indicates that 57.8% of the students (200 & 201) obtained a score of 75% or more on their test, with 11.8% of students spelling all words correctly or having only one error. Thirty-three point one percent (33.1%) scored between 50% - 75% and 9.5% scored below 50%.

Summary

Results from the GIM indicate that when the 200 and 201 student results are combined, 93.9% of the students place in the middle and high ranges for process writing; 91.1% of the students attain the same level of performance for essay writing. It was felt that these results generally reflected the expected performance of the identified population when results from the 200's and 201's are combined with one out of four students performing at the high level (23.4% - 28.4%) and another two-thirds of the students placing in the middle range (70.3% - 62.7%). When results for both groups are given separately, figures indicate that a good majority of the students from both groups place in the middle range. In this range, the pieces of writing are less identifiable as belonging to a specific group; however, the small margin of high 200's and of low 201's are recognizable.

It was felt by the markers that, in general, grade 11 Immersion students write well and have responded suitably to the tasks assigned. In several cases, the quality of writing was felt to be equivalent to a grade 12 standard.

Analytical Scales

Mechanics. The results of spelling, punctuation and capitalization are evidence that these areas represent strengths in both pieces of writing for the Grade 11 Immersion students (combined group). For punctuation and capitals, 89.1% scored in the middle/high range for process writing and 94.7% for essay writing It was noted that the use of colons and semi-colons was generally poor or,in many instances, non-existent. Comma faults were also present, although not as common. Students performed well in spelling with 90.9% (combined score) placing in the middle/high range for process writing and 87.0% scoring in the high/middle for essay writing.

On the spelling test, the distribution table given on page 38 of the Preliminary Report for Grade 11 Immersion Schools, indicates that 57.3% of the students (200 & 201) obtained a score of 75% or more on their test, with 9.5% of the students spelling all words correctly or having only one error. Thirty-three point one percent (33.1%) scored between 50-75% and 9.5% scored below 50%. On examining the sample one notes no definite trend in the most common errors, save for the following exceptions; the word "occurred" was spelled with one "r" in a great number of cases, the words "development" and "environment" denoted an interference from the second language. "Parliament", "prejudicious", and "ineligible" evidenced the greatest variety of spellings.

Wording and style is another area that was strong in both pieces of writing with a high percentage of students scoring in the middle/high range (89.7% for process writing, 90.5% for essay writing) indicating an evident thrust in reaching one of the grade 11 program objectives, that of developing style. However, for some students different aspects still need to be strengthened. In certain essays there was evidence of good ideas pertaining to the topic, but insufficient language skills to develop them. Thoughts were expressed in awkward sentence forms, and words and phrases chosen seemed colourless, uninteresting or too general or ambiguous, indicating a need to improve students' awareness of precise syntax. Many writers had not internalized a sense of audience and their writing did not reveal sensitivity to the reader. In process writing instructions to students asked for lively writing. It was found that generally, samples were not lively, although some students did attempt to meet this criterion by being facetious in their writing. Perhaps, as some markers felt, the nature of process writing makes it difficult to establish whether to credit clear, concise writing or more unique pieces.

Focus or Theme. In the area of focus or theme, results indicate that writers were better able to stay on task for process writing, with 90.3% of the students scoring in the middle/high range (combined results). This intensity of focus was not as evident for the essay (75.1% in the middle/high). In many cases, in this piece of writing, the direction established in the introduction was forgotten during the development of the writing. Having set themselves up well in their first paragraph, many writers, by the middle of the essay, lost sight of their direction and strayed off the topic. The assigned task was to write an opinion essay in order to persuade the reader of the validity of the adopted viewpoint. In many cases, the writing became a narrative piece, where students, in describing personal experiences which took up too much of the essay, strayed from the purpose and spoiled the structure. It was noted that in some cases, writers failed to establish the thesis or central idea perhaps due to a lack of title for their essay.

Organization and sequence. In general, results for organization and sequence were better for process writing than for essay writing, probably because this type of writing lends itself better to sequential organization. Many samples showed competent organization in process writing (23.4% scored in high for 200 & 201 combined). The remaining papers evidenced some of the following weaknesses: a series of one or two line paragraphs, absence of topic sentence, ineffective use or absence of transition phrases. However, it was felt by many markers that this may have been due, in part, to the vagueness of instructions given to the writers. The instructions did not specify whether the students were to write a paragraph or an essay.

Organization and sequence in essay writing denoted several weaknesses with 21.9% of the students scoring in the low range for the combined results. Many papers failed to introduce the central idea or thesis in a clear, effective opening paragraph that caught the interest of the reader and set the direction for the essay. Deficiencies were noted in topic sentences, paragraph division, and transition phrases. The majority of conclusions for these papers were weak. They were generally little more than one-line paragraphs which left the reader confused about the importance of the arguments presented. Another weakness noted quite frequently was the absence of a line of logic being developed by the writers. Coherence may have been present in a cluster of two or three sentences, but this inter-connectedness did not extend from paragraph to paragraph or from one section to another of the paper.

Usage and Sentence Structure. The two areas of usage and sentence structure were judged to be adequate, although, in both pieces of writing some aspects still need to be improved. In sentence structure, results indicate that nearly one out of five students (19.5% combined) scored in the high range and were able to manipulate a variety of structures effectively in essay writing. The percentage is a bit lower for process writing (14.9%). It was noted that for those performing at the lower levels, too many simple sentences were present, with the compound/complex type appearing infrequently. Furthermore, run-on sentences or sentence fragments were common.

In the area of usage, students scored slightly higher in process writing (86.3%) than in essay writing (83.4%). It was noted that even in some well-organized, focused pieces the following errors were present:

- incorrect use of future, future perfect tenses;
- incorrect pronoun reference;
- misuse of apostrophe in possessives;
- lack of passive voice; and
- lack of objectivity in writing demonstrated by the use of "you".

Ideas. In the area of ideas, writers obtained a better score in process writing (84.6% middle/high range) than they did in essay writing (79.3%). However, it was felt that the two writing tasks did not provide much scope for the students' creativity and originality. Process writing seemed to generate a greater variety of responses which appeared to be more interesting, while several pieces contained humour thus bringing occasional comic relief to the marker. The essay topic produced surprisingly conventional content. Many students adopted an essentially egocentric point of view preferring the safe route to risk-taking, and presenting the acceptable or obvious in cliche form.

Details and Elaboration of Ideas. In the combined results for details and elaboration of ideas, more writers scored in the high/middle range for process writing (82.9%) than for essay writing (77.5%). For those papers in the low range (17.1% - 22.5%), content in both pieces was too general. Little use was made of detail, images, or explanations and, as a result, the writings were dull and mediocre. Although ideas and elaboration of these are closely related, some inconsistency was noted. Certain students whose ideas rated only a 2 developed these ideas with considerable thoroughness, while others with subtle and original ideas neglected to develop them into vivid, descriptive products.

Overview

To sum up, GIM results show that an acceptable percentage of Grade 11 Immersion students can write a paper in both process writing and in essay writing, where the quality of thought and effectiveness of overall organization and presentation is appropriate for a grade 11 or better.

The analytical scale shows definite strengths in spelling, punctuation and capitalization, wording and style in both genres of writing. Organization and sequence, focus and theme, and usage are strengths in the process writing.

Results indicate satisfactory performances by the students in the following: sentence structure in both genres, ideas and elaboration of details in process writing, and organization/sequence, and usage in essay writing.

Areas needing improvement are: focus, ideas, and elaboration of details in essay writing.

Generally, there was consistently higher scoring by students in the process writing than in essay writing.

CHAPTER 6

Teacher Questionnaire

The teacher questionnaire was designed to obtain information regarding classroom practices utilized in writing instruction by Manitoba Language Arts teachers, the questionnaire being the same at all three levels: grades 4, 8, and 11. The analysis of the responses reported are for all grades combined. Further details, including tables indicating results by grade level, together with the questionnaire itself, are found in the Appendix.

Question 1: **The first item on the questionnaire required the teachers to indicate all grades and levels at which they teach Language Arts.**

Question 2: **This question addressed the issue of the kinds of pre-writing activities utilized in the classroom and the frequency of their use. The scale used to assess this frequency was:**

1 = never **2 = a few times a year**
3 = one to three times a month **4 = one or more times a week**

In all grades (4 - 8 - 11) the most common pre-writing activities were: talking, brainstorming, listening, free writing.

Clustering/mapping, listing although utilized in some classrooms were done much less frequently. Outlining was done more often in grade 11 than in the other grades.

Question 3: **What pre-writing strategies do you typically observe your students using on their own?**

In all grades (4 - 8 - 11) the strategies most often used by students were: jotting down notes, posing questions to be explored, outlining, categorizing. Drawing pictures and diagrams were most often observed in grades 4 and 8. Mapping/webbing and priorizing were used infrequently in all grades. Other strategies added to the list by the teachers were discussions, sharing ideas, brainstorming for all grades, and dramatization for grade 4.

Question 4: **In order of frequency (1 = most frequent, 2 = second most frequent, etc), please indicate how topics are generated for your students.**

In grade 4, topics were most frequently assigned by teachers or had to be chosen from a list of topics. More infrequently they were created by the students. The use of story starters, of modelling from a type of writing, of a topic chosen in relation to the theme being studied were suggested by teachers as other alternatives.

In grades 8 and 11, the topics were most often chosen from a list of possible topics, with topics assigned by the teacher appearing in second place. Student-initiated activities occurred infrequently.

Question 5: **In order of frequency (1 = most frequent, etc.) please indicate the five most common purposes for which students write.**

Remarks made by the teachers indicate that for many this question was difficult to answer as they felt some of these categories overlap. However, from the tables, "to entertain", "to describe", "to inform", "to explain" were the most commonly identified purposes for grades 4 and 8: "to explain", "to persuade", "to interpret" for grade 11.

__Question 6__: **In order of frequency (1 = most frequent, etc.) please indicate the most common __sources__ of topics for students' writing.**

For grades 4 and 8, the student's personal experience was listed as the most common source, response to literature was second on the list and topics in other school subjects was third.

For grade 11, response to literature appeared most frequently, with students writing about personal experiences in second rank.

__Question 7__: **How frequently do your students address the following __audiences__ in their writing?**

In all grades (4 - 8 - 11) students write equally as often for their peers, their teachers, or to themselves, with their parents or the general public being addressed a few times a year. In grade 4, students also write to fictitious characters or children in lower grades, while in grades 8-11, some may write to the administration or to public figures.

__Question 8__: **How often does __conferencing__ occur in your classroom?**

In grade 4, students conferencing with each other or with the teacher (from one to three times a month to one or more times a week) happens frequently approximately 85% of the time.

In grade 8, students conferencing with each other (once a month or more) happened 81% of the time. Group student/teacher conferencing happened 54.8% of the time, whereas individual student/teacher conferencing occurred less often (45.3%).

In grade 11, students conferencing with each other (one or more times a month) occurred 77.3% of the time. Group student/teacher conferencing happened 40.0% of the time and individual student/teacher conferencing 36.3%.

__Question 9__: **How often do your students engage in the following: drafting, revising, editing, rewriting for publication, proofreading, sharing with each other?**

In grade 4, students engage in all of these activities in at least 90% of their writings (once a month or more often), except for rewriting for publication which is done in 67.7% of their writings.

In grade 8, students engage in all of these activities in 80% of their writings (once a month or more often), except for rewriting for publication which is done in 38.1% of their writings.

In grade 11, students engage in all of these activities in 63.7% to 72.7% of their writings, with revising being done in 81.8% of the writings. Rewriting for publication was done in 27.3% of their writings (once a month or more).

Question 10: **In what proportion of writing assignments do students prepare one or more drafts in addition to the final copy?**

This question yielded answers represented by two different percentages which made it hard to assess the results.

Question 11: **How are students' final products shared with others?**

It was evident from the answers supplied that much sharing of the students' final products goes on. From the tables for all grades (4, 8, 11) many of the writings are read or presented to the group, put on class or school bulletin boards, placed in school libraries, or published in school newspapers.

Other forms of sharing comprise group and divisional anthologies, Young Author's Conferences, Language Arts Festival, penpal letters sent to other schools.

Question 12: **Do Language Arts teachers and other teachers in your school ever meet to plan writing across the curriculum?**

Answers from the tables show that for

grade 4	41.5% (YES)	49.2% (NO)
grade 8	45.2% (YES)	50.0% (NO)
grade 11	40.9% (YES)	59.1% (NO)

Question 13: **Do your students use writing folders?**

From the tables, results show that in

grade 4	75.4% (YES)	21.5% (NO)
grade 8	61.9% (YES)	33.3% (NO)
grade 11	45.5% (YES)	45.5% (NO)

The numerous comments made by teachers in response to this question indicate a widespread and enthusiastic use of writing folders which are used by many as organizational and motivational tools in the writing classroom. Many teachers acknowledged their usefulness in evaluating the students' progress in writing over time in a variety of writing assignments.

CHAPTER 7

Findings and Recommendations

The purpose of the 1988 Writing Assessment Program was to provide data and feedback about the quality of student writing and the instructional context in which writing was being taught. The results of the Assessment would also indicate the extent to which progress has been made generally in implementing the K-12 integrated English Language Arts program since its introduction into schools in 1982, and measure the specific contribution of the Writing Process model in advancing writing competence among students. The information obtained was to aid local and provincial curriculum development, assist in the professional development of teachers, and thereby enhance the education of students in the Province.

The concluding section of the General Report, therefore, contains in summary the findings and recommendations of the Writing Technical Advisory Committee based upon the Results of the Writing Test, the Comments of the Markers, and the responses of teachers to the Questionnaire.

The conclusions of the Committee and the recommendations which follow are directed to all educators and educational groups involved in the teaching and assessment of student writing.

The Writing Technical Advisory Committee took several innovative steps to improve the reliability of its testing program.

At each grade level, two pieces of writing in different modes were assigned on different days. In each assignment the writer's role, the audience, and purpose were clearly specified. Each piece of writing was rated by, at least two independent and carefully trained markers who were, also, experienced teachers at that grade level. Students were given the opportunity to submit their best rehearsed and researched performance under classroom conditions which allowed the re-writing of drafts.

It is generally accepted, however, that there are a number of constraints to reliable testing: for example, writers vary in their performance from time to time and according to the task assigned; carefully trained markers can disagree; the conditions under which students write can affect their performance.

The writing of students in the grades 4, 8, and 11 samples were assessed first on a General Impression Marking scale (GIM) of 1 to 12, and then scored on nine Analytic scales to measure more specifically their performance in the nine stylistic elements regarded as essential to school writing.

The GIM score measured the communicative effectiveness of the writing; its level of thought, the appropriateness of expression, and the writer's awareness of audience and purpose.

The nine Analytic scores provided additional feedback about the ability of students to choose and control the use of the following elements of writing: Organization and Sequence, Wording and Style, Focus or Theme, Ideas, Choice of Detail and Elaboration of Ideas, Sentence Structure, Usage, Punctuation and Capitalization, and Spelling.

General Impression Marking

On the basis of the General Impression Marking Scale (GIM) scores, it was found that:

(i) In the three grades tested, a fair percentage of students were judged capable of a high level of proficiency in writing. The distribution of students performing in the high range was:

Grade 4

Story	12.5%
Report	10.6%

Grade 8

Persuasive	28.0%
Narrative	30.4%

Grade 11

	200/201	200	201
Process	23.4%	22.4%	0.0%
Essay	28.4%	27.2%	0.0%

(ii) Most of the writing in the Provincial sample was within the middle range of expectation; that is, though the writing of these students exhibited weaknesses, it was considered to be functional for the particular grade level. The distribution of students performing in the middle range was:

Grade 4

Story	73.6%
Report	68.7%

Grade 8

Persuasive	58.1%
Narrative	54.1%

Grade 11

	200/201	200	201
Process	70.3%	71.8%	71.5%
Essay	62.7%	64.9%	71.5%

(iii) A number of students at each grade scored in the low range, indicative of a need for extensive instruction. The distribution of students performing in the low range was:

Grade 4

Story	13.9%
Report	20.7%

Grade 8

Persuasive	13.9%
Narrative	15.5%

Grade 11

	200/201	200	201
Process	6.3%	5.8%	28.6%
Essay	8.9%	7.9%	28.6%

A comparison of the mean scores, in brackets, in the different modes of writing assigned reveals the following:

- In grade 4, students performed somewhat better in Story Writing (6.33) than in Report Writing (5.98).
- In grade 8, students did better in Narrative Writing (7.17) than in Persuasive Writing (7.08).
- In grade 11 (combined 200/201), students scored better on the Essay (7.25) than on the Process Writing (7.21) assignment.
- In the English 200 sample, a mean performance mark of (7.22) was recorded for Essay Writing while the Process Writing Assessment received a mean score of (7.19).
- The English 201 sample registered a mean of (5.43) for the Essay and (5.86) for the Process Writing.

Analytic Marking

The nine Analytic scale scores for the essential features of school writing were marked holistically. This approach conforms with the notion that in the composing process these elements are interrelated. Their deployment in writing is a matter of choice made in terms of purpose, audience, and stance or point of view.

(i) In the three grades tested the best performances were registered in the area of mechanics and conventions of writing: Spelling, Punctuation and Capitalization. Scores in the areas of usage and wording and style were also generally good.

The somewhat lower scores registered in Usage were often caused by careless and inaccurate syntax: faulty subject/verb, sentence fragments, and, in grade 11, run-on sentences and poor pronoun reference. Some evidence of interference with the second language was also noted.

(ii) The weakest scores at all grade levels were recorded in the areas of Organization and Sequence, Focus or Theme, Ideas, Detail and Elaboration of Ideas, and sentence structure.

These areas involve the higher order of thinking and language skills such as the ability to generate, interpret, apply, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate ideas and to present opinions in an orderly progression with a sense of purpose.

Recommendations

Many changes have taken place in the field of writing in the last few years and teachers have become more conscious of how children develop as writers. They are aware that in order to help their students in the writing strand of the language arts, they must become involved with the children in the writing process rather than simply in evaluating the product. They understand that writing is not a linear activity but one which contains "recursive, overlapping steps" (Calkins, 1986), and that it is through what is known as the "process of writing", namely rehearsal, drafting, revision, editing, that children learn to react with their writing and become better writers. They recognize that the frequency with which children write is the single most important factor in their development as writers, that the element of time is crucial if their students are to do their best, and that conferencing, both student/teacher and peer conferencing, allows the children to become risk-takers and to see themselves as authors. The questionnaire responses point to the fact that much sharing of students' texts and publication of these happen in the classroom and that writing folders or some other method of keeping track of students' writing (either in progress or in finished form) are being utilized by teachers.

The "process of writing" implies writing frequently with much risk-taking on the part of the students. It does not, however, imply lack of direction on the part of the teachers. In order to extend children's growth as writers, teachers need to become active partners in their students' writing, helping them to understand the functions and power of print through mini-lessons (Calkins). Mini-lessons are a time for teacher input with the purpose of adding to the students' information: without this input there would be no change in the children's writing.

These mini-lessons, involving the whole class or a group of students during short periods of time, could centre on different areas of difficulties such as focus, voice, point of view, or be used to develop already existing skills, e.g., vocabulary, style. Outlining, mapping, categorizing, priorizing of information in the pre-writing stage would address students' difficulties with organization and sequencing. Discussions, both in large and small groups, and brainstorming are some of the most useful pre-writing techniques for generating ideas. Greater use of these methods as well as the use of drama, drawing, and interviewing would enlarge the pool of students' ideas and give them help in the elaboration of these. Sentence structure could be improved through sentence combining and sentence manipulation activities. Mini-lessons are useful in clarifying the purpose and the audience for which the writing is being done. This exercise could lead to more meaningful writing situations in which students write texts reflecting a range of purposes and audiences.

This is also a time where difficulties with interferences in usage, punctuation, capitals, and spelling caused by the learning of a second language, are addressed. It is important to keep in mind that cognitive clarity about these areas will greatly diminish these difficulties, whereas, frequent writing with editing on the part of the students will be most beneficial to the mechanics of writing.

For those teachers needing more help with the implementing of these techniques and others to improve their students' writing, information can be found in the Language Arts Curricula, journals, and books about reading and writing (see bibliography).

Teachers want to take responsibility for their own professional development and are always searching for ways by which they can improve their teaching. It is fortunate that excellent workshops on the process of writing are being given and that many books on good writing exist.

1. In all grades the best performance scores were obtained in the mechanics of writing; Spelling, Punctuation and Capitalization.

   It is recommended that:

   - **The strong Spelling and Punctuation program in schools be maintained and incorporated into pre- and post-writing activities in imaginative ways without imposing restraints on the students' expression of thoughts and feelings.**

     Where weak usage occurs, particularly in cases from weaker language background, instruction at the sentence level be given. This instruction should not be divorced from students' actual writing.

2. On the Analytic scales, weak scores were recorded for all grades in the important areas of Content and Expression; namely Ideas, Organization and Sequence, Choice of Detail and Elaboration, Theme or Focus, and Sentence Structure.

These five components of the composing process involve such high order thinking and language skills as generating, interpreting, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating ideas and presenting them in orderly progression with a sense of purpose.

In each of these five elements, 15% or more of all students were functioning at the low level. The writing of these students was rated weak because of the poverty or superficiality of ideas. Students in this group who had original ideas often lacked the ability to organize and express their thoughts effectively.

The results show most students in the sample need instruction in procedures which would help them explore ideas sensitively and systematically in order to determine what they wish to say.

Replies to the questionnaire suggest that most teachers use only a limited range of pre-writing activities. The use of effective improvised classroom drama is significantly low.

A particular weakness in the writing at all grades was the inability of students to clarify and elaborate upon their ideas.

Also, the markers in their comments refer to the lack of editing done between first and final drafts and the failure of students to use the post-writing stage to elaborate ideas and to link purpose, audience, and voice in their writing.

From the test results and markers' comments, it seems necessary that students be given more help at the post-writing stage in learning how to focus, sustain, and support their ideas, and to master strategies that would make their writing more vivid and better organized.

Specific help should be given in supporting assertions, qualifying generalizations by using modifiers, phrases, and clauses.

It is recommended that:

- **Provincial and local inservice agencies provide workshops and discussions for teachers to examine the writing process. These workshops should aim to help teachers remove many of the frustrations and difficulties many students feel about writing by:-**

    (a) promoting useful pre-writing activities which promote the generation and elaboration of ideas, including the use of classroom drama, discussion, brainstorming, and role-playing;

    (b) assisting teachers to apply and adapt small group instruction to local conditions;

(c) viewing and discussing tapes of good classroom practices, particularly the viewing of tapes dealing with initiating student writing;

(d) helping teachers to formulate topics for student writing and expand the uses and amounts of writing done in school; and

(e) exploring more fully the relationship between expressive (personal) writing and transactional (informational) writing.

♦ **Teachers**

(a) strive to develop their own facility in writing;

(b) attend local and provincial workshops to examine and study the curriculum as it applies to the writing process in general, and to the particularities of the the learning situation in a second-lange setting;

(c) use language arts for teaching writing skills required in different subject areas and use the content of other subjects to teach language arts;

(d) be aware that development in writing is based on the requirements of the individual student's writing which allows the marker to maintain a focus on the central meaning of the written product while observing the way the parts relate to one another;

(e) include in their methodology such strategies as conferencing, peer-tutoring, drama, puppetry and interviews, and the use of writing folders. All of these are essential to the teaching and evaluation of spoken and written language.

(f) become cognizant of the holistic approach of evaluating students' writing which allows the marker to maintain a focus on the central meaning of the written product while observing the way the parts relate to one another.

3. Responses to the Questionnaire indicate an interest in evaluation generally and a growing use of peer evaluation and anthologies (folders) of written products as well as an improved attitude among teachers to provincial testing since 1982.

The interest of teachers in holistic methods of marking stems from the need for accurate and efficient methods of monitoring writing growth.

Large class sizes, mounting parental and public interest, and an anticipated increase in the amount of writing expected to be marked, demand that the methods of monitoring be visible, reliable, progressive in nature and economical in the use of the teachers' time.

It is recommended that:

♦ **The Department of Education and Training continue to initiate and run inservices and workshops on evaluation of writing so that teachers throughout the Province are exposed to successful approaches and criteria for evaluation. These approaches should include ways of commenting positively on writing that would generally help the student.**

4. Teachers from kindergarten to beyond high school face a challenge to develop writing competence in students through learning strategies and environments to learning which while emphasizing a process approach to learning, recognizes the importance of knowledge.

   In an age of technology there is a need to access and communicate large amounts of information. The ability to write remains a basic prerequisite to success in our society.

   This challenge to serve youth and society under the fluid conditions that prevail today demands the collective effort of all educators.

   It is recommended that:

   ♦ **The Department of Education and Training undertake the reorganization of the Manitoba Writing Project in conjunction with the universities, community colleges, faculties of education, Manitoba Teachers' Society, and the Manitoba Association of School Trustees.**

   The purpose of this Project would be:

   (i) **to promote interest in the teaching of writing at all levels.**

   (ii) **to provide summer workshops, courses with university accreditation for teachers.**

   (iii) **to develop a pool or cadre of teachers of writing available for local inservice education.**

   (iv) **to act as a clearing house for ideas, strategies, research and study in writing, and to maintain contact with similar organizations throughout the world.**

   (v) **to promote interest in student writing.**

   (vi) **to make and circulate tapes of good writing practices.**

5. Given the growing knowledge and interest on how children develop as writers and given that this Writing Assessment was designed to reflect what is now considered essential in the teaching and evaluation of writing, the Technical Advisory Committee recommended that the divisional inservice agencies provide instructional leadership and support professional development in all areas of the writing process.

   It is therefore recommended that:

   ♦ **School Divisions both encourage and provide teachers with the opportunity, through workshops and discussions, to:**

   (a) **examine the writing process for themselves;**

   (b) **examine and study the curriculum as it applies to the writing process and to initiate inquiry into the kinds of writing students need in different contexts; and**

(c) **develop an awareness of the holistic method of evaluating the wirtten products of their students and acquire the skills to practice it in their classroom.**

6. Given the importance of language and writing across levels and content areas to one's learning, universities and other post-secondary institutions are urged to provide increased opportunities for teachers in training to develop their skills in the teaching of language and writing.

   It is therefore recommended that:

◆ **Teachers in training at the undergraduate level:**

(a) **be required to take courses that provide them with a good understanding of the current philosophy concerning the writing process;**

(b) **be taught, through very practical methods, how to evaluate their students' writing, in line with what is now considered essential in writing;**

(c) **have access to writing centres (already in existence in some universities). These centres allow participants to apply to their own assignments the principles of the process of writing and, thereby, gain an understanding of this concept and of the strategies involved. This practical training would have a positive spin-off on their teaching of writing in the classroom.**

7. The Department of Education and Training is to be commended for the type of testing instrument developed for the Writing Assessment of 1988. The purpose of this test was to ensure that the goals and objectives of the writing strand of the Manitoba Language Arts Curriculum were accurately and comprehensively reflected.

   The testing committee, aware of the needs of children as writers, attempted to create a testing situation that replicated as closely as possible the classroom procedures used by teachers following the writing process. Provisions were made for:

   1. the writing for different purposes:
      Grade 4 - story writing and report writing
      Grade 8 - persuasive writing and narrative writing
      Grade 11 - process writing and essay writing

   2. a time format that allowed for writing to take place over a period of several days (3 or 4), and which included group discussions, revising, editing, proofreading, and recopying of final copies.

   Teachers on the Technical Advisory Committee thought that the time dimension was crucial. They felt that if enough time were given for the test, allowing it to parallel the actual writing process in the classroom, then the writing assessment could be viewed by all participants (teachers and students alike) as an authentic activity in communication occurring in the classroom, with everyone participating. It would remove the burden of being the "unlucky" few, randomly chosen to write a test. It seems important that the assessment be accepted as a useful teaching tool in classroom communication given in the context of process writing.

According to the members of the Technical Advisory Committee, this procedure did produce positive results; some further refinement, however, is still required.

It is, therefore, recommended that:

- **The Department of Education and Training consider the following with an aim to improving future tests:**

(a) increasing the time span for writing the test (to a two weeks' period, if need be), in order to further approximate the writing process as it happens in the classroom. This time span would allow:

- **for a sharing of the students' texts with their peers. This would legitimize instructions given in the test to establish the audience, i.e., "Write your story with your classmates as intended audience".**
- **for a more thorough research of a subject for report writing (in grade 4). The test instructions suggested that one hour be allowed to do relevant research at school and that encouragement be given for further research at home. It was noted that library facilities were overtaxed when two or three classes were doing research at the same time, and that many children do not have resource materials for research at home. A longer time in which to do this research would alleviate this problem.**

(b) providing clearer instructions regarding the use of dictionaries, thesaurus, language aids (for checking surface features) and "slim-jims", notes (for doing research) when writing the test. These are valid, recommended tools when writing in the classroom, and committee members felt their use should be permitted when doing the writing assessment. The stated purpose of the test was to "find out how well students are using some important skills in writing" and not "how well they can remember (memory test)".

(c) re-examining the categores used for the analytic marking. It is suggested that one category, mechanics, could include spelling, punctuation, capitalization and usage. Also, the criteria for style, which might include sentence structure, deserves to be elaborated.

(d) providing for only a code number to appear on the writing booklets, eliminating any possible bias effect caused by the presence of names, or levels (i.e., 200-201, as in the case of grade 11).

(e) taking steps to increase student motivation in writing the test. Performance on the provincial assessment has no influence on report card marks or school grades. Teachers on the Technical Advisory Committee felt that for this reason, some students, especially at the upper levels, may fail to put forward sincere, positive efforts. It was also noted that because of the semester system, some schools having no instruction in English at that time, did not participate in the Assessment. Other schools chose to have the students picked in the random samples removed from the classroom to write, while the rest of the students carried on their regular work. The Committee suggested that if, in the future years, provisions were made by the divisions to obtain total class group participation in a writing assignment that meets the conditions of an authentic writing situation, the random samples forwarded to Manitoba Education would be a real test of what happens in a writing classroom in the province.

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APPENDIX

TEACHER SURVEY

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS WRITING ASSESSMENT 1988

TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE GRADE 4 IMMERSION

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect information regarding classroom practices in writing instruction. The data collected will be used to help interpret the results of the student testing.

1. Indicate below **all** grades and levels at which you teach English language arts (**check all that apply**):

1.5% grade 1
3.1% grade 2
9.2% grade 3
95.4% grade 4
10.8% grade 5

9.2% grade 6
3.1% grade 7
1.5% grade 8
0.0% grade 9
0.0% English/anglais 100

0.0% English/anglais 101
0.0% English/anglais 200
0.0% English/anglais 201
0.0% English/anglais 300
0.0% English/anglais 301

NOTE: Please be sure to answer all subsequent questions in terms of your grade/level Grade 4 Immersion program. (Sample size = 65)

2. Please circle the appropriate number to indicate the frequency with which you use any of the following pre-writing activities:

1 = never
2 = a few times a year
3 = one to three times a month
4 = one or more times a week

		1	2	3	4	N/R
a.	Talking	0.0%	4.6%	16.9%	76.9%	1.5%
b.	Interviewing	9.2%	53.8%	27.7%	6.2%	3.1%
c.	Brainstorming	0.0%	3.1%	53.8%	40.0%	3.1%
d.	Drama	15.4%	63.1%	18.5%	1.5%	1.5%
e.	Viewing	15.4%	49.2%	26.2%	1.5%	7.7%
f.	Listening	1.5%	18.5%	33.8%	43.1%	3.1%
g.	Sensory Activities	24.6%	33.8%	26.2%	7.7%	7.7%
h.	Mental Exercises (Imaging).	6.2%	27.7%	44.6%	16.9%	4.6%
i.	Free Writing	3.1%	6.2%	27.7%	61.5%	1.5%
j.	Writing Leads	3.1%	27.7%	41.5%	20.0%	7.7%
k.	Drawing	6.2%	23.1%	43.1%	26.2%	1.5%
l.	Outlining	7.7%	27.7%	46.2%	12.3%	6.2%
m.	Clustering/Mapping	16.9%	41.5%	32.3%	1.5%	7.7%
n.	Listing	3.1%	35.4%	46.2%	12.3%	3.1%

3. What pre-writing strategies do you typically observe your students using on their own? (**check all that apply**)

61.5%	posing questions to be explored
64.6%	drawing pictures/diagrams
89.2%	jotting notes (words, phrases, ideas)
20.0%	priorizing
53.8%	outlining
29.2%	webbing
52.3%	categorizing
15.4%	mapping
30.8%	rehearsing
9.2%	other (please specify):

4. In order of frequency (1= most frequent, 2= second most frequent, etc.) please indicate how writing topics are generated for your students.

	Frequency				
	1	2	3	4	NR
assigned by teacher	38.5%	21.5%	24.6%	1.5%	13.8%
students choose from a list of possible topics	29.2%	40.0%	16.9%	0.0%	13.8%
created by student	24.6%	26.2%	27.7%	3.1%	18.5%
other (please specify)	0.0%	3.1%	1.5%	3.1%	92.3%

5. In order of frequency (1= most frequent, etc.) please indicate the five most common **purposes** for which your students write:

	Frequency					
	1	2	3	4	5	NR
to explain	3.1%	15.4%	18.5%	10.8%	12.3%	40.0%
to persuade	0.0	0.0	3.1	1.5	1.5	93.8
to entertain	50.8	9.2	6.2	4.6	6.2	23.1
to inform	12.3	15.4	18.5	10.8	1.5	41.5
to describe	4.6	29.2	7.7	15.4	6.2	36.9
to debate	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
to interpret	1.5	3.1	3.1	1.5	4.6	86.2
other (please specify)	1.5	0.0	0.0	1.5	0.0	96.9
to instruct	0.0	0.0	4.6	1.5	3.1	90.8
to play with language	4.6	7.7	7.7	10.8	12.3	56.9
to explore	6.2	0.0	4.6	3.1	7.7	78.5
to discover	3.1	7.7	1.5	9.2	6.2	72.3
to clarify	0.0	1.5	0.0	0.0	1.5	96.9
to organize	0.0	0.0	4.6	15.4	12.3	67.7
to learn	4.6	1.5	9.2	1.5	13.8	69.2

6. In order of frequency (1= most frequent, etc.) indicate the most common **sources** of topics for your students' writing:

	Frequency					
	1	2	3	4	5	NR
audio visual material	1.5%	6.2%	12.3%	23.1%	30.8%	26.2%
exposure to community (field trips, etc.)	1.5	7.7	10.8	27.7	23.1	29.2
topics in other school subjects	7.7	10.8	35.4	10.8	10.8	24.6
in response to literature	24.6	36.9	10.8	6.2	1.5	20.0
students' personal experience	50.8	24.6	7.7	3.1	0.0	13.8

7. How frequently do your students address the following audiences in their writing?

1 = never **2 = a few times a year** **3 = one to three times a month**
4 = one or more times a week

	1	2	3	4	N/R
a. Self.	4.6%	16.9%	26.2%	44.6%	7.7%
b. Peers	0.0%	9.2%	46.2%	41.5%	3.1%
c. Teacher (as trusted adult).	3.1%	13.8%	38.5%	40.0%	4.6%
d. Parents	9.2%	64.6%	12.3%	1.5%	12.3%
e. Public.	26.2%	44.6%	13.8%	3.1%	12.3%
f. Other (please specify). . .	0.0%	7.7%	1.5%	0.0%	90.8%

8. How frequently do the following occur in your classroom **(use the scale from question 7)**?

	1	2	3	4	N/R
a. individual student-teacher conferences	0.0%	12.3%	60.0%	23.1%	4.6%
b. group student-teacher conferences	1.5%	27.7%	47.7%	20.0%	3.1%
c. students conferencing with each other.	1.5%	9.2%	47.7%	36.9%	4.6%

9. How frequently do your students engage in the following **(use the scale from question 7)**?

	1	2	3	4	N/R
a. Drafting.	1.5%	4.6%	40.0%	50.8%	3.1%
b. Revising.	0.0%	3.1%	56.9%	36.9%	3.1%
c. Editing	0.0%	6.2%	60.0%	30.8%	3.1%
d. Rewriting for publication .	4.6%	21.5%	49.2%	18.5%	6.2%
e. Proofreading.	0.0%	6.2%	49.2%	41.5%	3.1%
f. Sharing with others	0.0%	6.2%	46.2%	44.6%	3.1%

10. In what proportion of writing assignments do students prepare one or more drafts in addition to the final copy? **Please circle the closest number.**

0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%	NR
0.0%	1.5%	3.1%	3.1%	6.2%	10.8%	4.6%	18.5%	12.3%	13.8%	16.9%	9.2%

11. **How** are students' final products shared with others? (**Check all those that occur at least several times a year**):

90.8% put on class bulletin board

49.2% put on school (e.g., library) bulletin board

40.0% placed in school library

24.6% published in school newspaper

4.6% published in community newspaper

95.4% read or presented to a group

23.1% other (please specify)______________________________

12. Do language arts teachers and other subject teachers in your school ever meet to plan writing across the curriculum? 41.5% YES 49.2% NO 9.2% NR

If yes, how frequently do you meet? **Check one.**

26.2% once or twice a year

13.8% 3 - 5 times a year

3.1% 6 or more times a year.

56.9% NR

13. Do your students use Writing Folders? 75.4% YES 21.5% NO 3.1% NR

If yes, briefly describe how the use of the folder reflects the phases of the writing process itself.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS WRITING ASSESSMENT 1988

TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE GRADE 8 IMMERSION

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect information regarding classroom practices in writing instruction. The data collected will be used to help interpret the results of the student testing.

1. Indicate below **all** grades and levels at which you teach English language arts (**check all that apply**):

0.0% grade 1
0.0% grade 2
0.0% grade 3
0.0% grade 4
0.0% grade 5

4.8% grade 6
33.3% grade 7
90.5% grade 8
21.4% grade 9
4.8% English/anglais 100

0.0% English/anglais 101
2.4% English/anglais 200
2.4% English/anglais 201
7.1% English/anglais 300
0.0% English/anglais 301

NOTE: Please be sure to answer all subsequent questions in terms of your grade/level Grade 8 Immersion program. (Sample size = 42)

2. Please circle the appropriate number to indicate the frequency with which you use any of the following pre-writing activities:

1 = never 2 = a few times a year 3 = one to three times a month
4 = one or more times a week

	1	2	3	4	N/R
a. Talking	0.0%	4.8%	40.5%	50.0%	4.8%
b. Interviewing	21.4%	54.8%	14.3%	2.4%	7.1%
c. Brainstorming	2.4%	16.7%	45.2%	33.3%	2.4%
d. Drama	16.7%	50.0%	23.8%	7.1%	2.4%
e. Viewing	4.8%	52.4%	33.3%	4.8%	4.8%
f. Listening	9.5%	9.5%	31.0%	47.6%	2.4%
g. Sensory Activities	16.7%	57.1%	14.3%	7.1%	4.8%
h. Mental Exercises (Imaging)	4.8%	45.2%	33.3%	14.3%	2.4%
i. Free Writing	7.1%	23.8%	45.2%	21.4%	2.4%
j. Writing Leads	2.4%	38.1%	45.2%	11.9%	2.4%
k. Drawing	19.0%	47.6%	28.6%	2.4%	2.4%
l. Outlining	4.8%	45.2%	33.3%	14.3%	2.4%
m. Clustering/Mapping	28.6%	33.3%	28.6%	4.8%	4.8%
n. Listing	2.4%	38.1%	52.4%	4.8%	2.4%

3. What pre-writing strategies do you typically observe your students using on their own? (**check all that apply**)

61.9% posing questions to be explored

40.5% drawing pictures/diagrams

90.5% jotting notes (words, phrases, ideas)

35.7% priorizing

66.7% outlining

33.3% webbing

40.5% categorizing

11.9% mapping

23.8% rehearsing

2.4% other (please specify):

4. In order of frequency (1= most frequent, 2= second most frequent, etc.) please indicate how writing topics are generated for your students.

	Frequency				
	1	2	3	4	NR
assigned by teacher	40.5%	28.6%	21.4%	0.0%	9.5%
students choose from a list of possible topics	45.2%	45.2%	4.8%	0.0%	4.8%
created by student	11.9%	23.8%	47.6%	4.8%	11.9%
other (please specify)	0.0%	0.0%	4.8%	4.8%	90.5%

5. In order of frequency (1= most frequent, etc.) please indicate the five most common **purposes** for which your students write:

	Frequency					
	1	2	3	4	5	NR
to explain	9.5%	14.3%	16.7%	14.3%	2.4%	42.9%
to persuade	4.8	7.1	16.7	19.0	4.8	47.6
to entertain	11.9	16.7	9.5	2.4	4.8	54.8
to inform	14.3	2.4	0.0	14.3	14.3	54.8
to describe	23.8	16.7	11.9	9.5	2.4	35.7
to debate	0.0	2.4	0.0	7.1	0.0	90.5
to interpret	0.0	7.1	7.1	0.0	9.5	76.2
other (please specify)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.4	97.6
to instruct	0.0	2.4	0.0	2.4	0.0	95.2
to play with language	0.0	0.0	4.8	0.0	4.8	90.5
to explore	2.4	0.0	4.8	0.0	0.0	92.9
to discover	0.0	7.1	0.0	4.8	2.4	85.7
to clarify	2.4	2.4	0.0	0.0	11.9	83.3
to organize	0.0	0.0	2.4	4.8	14.3	78.6
to learn	7.1	0.0	4.8	0.0	2.4	85.7

6. In order of frequency (1= most frequent, etc.) indicate the most common **sources** of topics for your students' writing:

	Frequency					
	1	2	3	4	5	NR
audio visual material	2.4%	0.0%	23.8%	21.4%	19.0%	33.3%
exposure to community (field trips, etc.)	0.0	0.0	14.3	23.8	21.4	40.5
topics in other school subjects	2.4	14.3	31.0	19.0	11.9	21.4
in response to literature	33.3	45.2	9.5	0.0	0.0	11.9
students' personal experience	52.4	31.0	7.1	0.0	0.0	9.5

7. How frequently do your students address the following **audiences** in their writing?

1 = never
2 = a few times a year
3 = one to three times a month
4 = one or more times a week

		1	2	3	4	N/R
a.	Self.	9.5%	11.9%	50.0%	21.4%	7.1%
b.	Peers	0.0%	11.9%	59.5%	23.8%	4.8%
c.	Teacher (as trusted adult).	4.8%	14.3%	45.2%	31.0%	4.8%
d.	Parents	28.6%	45.2%	7.1%	0.0%	19.0%
e.	Public.	26.2%	54.8%	9.5%	2.4%	7.1%
f.	Other (please specify). . .	0.0%	4.8%	2.4%	0.0%	92.9%

8. How frequently do the following occur in your classroom **(use the scale from question 7)**?

		1	2	3	4	N/R
a.	individual student-teacher conferences	0.0%	45.2%	40.5%	4.8%	9.5%
b.	group student-teacher conferences	11.9%	23.8%	40.5%	14.3%	9.5%
c.	students conferencing with each other.	2.4%	9.5%	52.4%	28.6%	7.1%

9. How frequently do your students engage in the following (**use the scale from question 7**)?

		1	2	3	4	N/R
a.	Drafting.	0.0%	11.9%	61.9%	19.0%	7.1%
b.	Revising.	0.0%	14.3%	57.1%	21.4%	7.1%
c.	Editing	0.0%	11.9%	54.8%	23.8%	9.5%
d.	Rewriting for publication .	9.5%	40.5%	28.6%	9.5%	11.9%
e.	Proofreading.	0.0%	11.9%	57.1%	23.8%	7.1%
f.	Sharing with others	0.0%	4.8%	59.5%	28.6%	7.1%

10. In what proportion of writing assignments do students prepare one or more drafts in addition to the final copy? **Please circle the closest number.**

0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%	NR
0.0%	0.0%	7.1%	9.5%	4.8%	11.9%	7.1%	21.4%	7.1%	19.0%	7.1%	4.8%

11. **How** are students' final products shared with others? (**Check all those that occur at least several times a year**):

66.7%	put on class bulletin board
19.0%	put on school (e.g., library) bulletin board
19.0%	placed in school library
31.0%	published in school newspaper
9.5%	published in community newspaper
97.6%	read or presented to a group
16.7%	other (please specify)________________

12. Do language arts teachers and other subject teachers in your school ever meet to plan writing across the curriculum? 45.2% YES 50.0% NO 4.8% NR

If yes, how frequently do you meet? **Check one.**

26.2%	once or twice a year
7.1%	3 - 5 times a year
14.3%	6 or more times a year.
52.4%	NR

13. Do your students use Writing Folders? 61.9% YES 33.3% NO 4.8% NR

If yes, briefly describe how the use of the folder reflects the phases of the writing process itself.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS WRITING ASSESSMENT 1988

TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE IMMERSION 200 & 201 COMBINED

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect information regarding classroom practices in writing instruction. The data collected will be used to help interpret the results of the student testing.

1. Indicate below **all** grades and levels at which you teach English language arts **(check all that apply)**:

0.0% grade 1
0.0% grade 2
0.0% grade 3
0.0% grade 4
0.0% grade 5
0.0% grade 6
0.0% grade 7
0.0% grade 8
9.1% grade 9
59.1% English/anglais 100
27.3% English/anglais 101
72.7% English/anglais 200
54.5% English/anglais 201
45.5% English/anglais 300
18.2% English/anglais 301

NOTE: Please be sure to answer all subsequent questions in terms of your grade/level Anglais 200 & 201 Combined program. (Sample size = 22)

2. Please circle the appropriate number to indicate the frequency with which you use any of the following pre-writing activities:

1 = never 2 = a few times a year 3 = one to three times a month 4 = one or more times a week

	1	2	3	4	N/R
a. Talking	4.5%	4.5%	31.8%	59.1%	0.0%
b. Interviewing	13.6%	68.2%	13.6%	0.0%	4.5%
c. Brainstorming	0.0%	22.7%	45.5%	27.3%	4.5%
d. Drama	22.7%	36.4%	27.3%	9.1%	4.5%
e. Viewing	4.5%	50.0%	36.4%	4.5%	4.5%
f. Listening	4.5%	22.7%	40.9%	27.3%	4.5%
g. Sensory Activities	40.9%	36.4%	9.1%	4.5%	9.1%
h. Mental Exercises (Imaging).	22.7%	50.0%	13.6%	4.5%	9.1%
i. Free Writing	4.5%	27.3%	27.3%	31.8%	9.1%
j. Writing Leads	18.2%	27.3%	40.9%	0.0%	13.6%
k. Drawing	40.9%	40.9%	4.5%	0.0%	13.6%
l. Outlining	0.0%	31.8%	50.0%	13.6%	4.5%
m. Clustering/Mapping	40.9%	31.8%	4.5%	4.5%	18.2%
n. Listing	4.5%	50.0%	31.8%	9.1%	4.5%

3. What pre-writing strategies do you typically observe your students using on their own? **(check all that apply)**

63.6%	posing questions to be explored
13.6%	drawing pictures/diagrams
90.9%	jotting notes (words, phrases, ideas)
59.1%	priorizing
95.5%	outlining
9.1%	webbing
59.1%	categorizing
4.5%	mapping
31.8%	rehearsing
4.5%	other (please specify):

4. In order of frequency (1= most frequent, 2= second most frequent, etc.) please indicate how writing topics are generated for your students.

	Frequency				
	1	2	3	4	NR
assigned by teacher	36.4%	31.8%	27.3%	0.0%	4.5%
students choose from a list of possible topics	54.5%	31.8%	9.1%	0.0%	4.5%
created by student	4.5%	27.3%	50.0%	4.5%	13.6%
other (please specify)	0.0%	4.5%	0.0%	0.0%	95.5%

5. In order of frequency (1= most frequent, etc.) please indicate the five most common **purposes** for which your students write:

	Frequency 1	2	3	4	5	NR
to explain	31.8%	13.6%	9.1%	9.1%	4.5%	31.8%
to persuade	9.1	13.6	13.6	13.6	0.0	50.0
to entertain	0.0	4.5	9.1	0.0	22.7	63.6
to inform	9.1	9.1	9.1	4.5	4.5	63.6
to describe	4.5	0.0	9.1	9.1	9.1	68.2
to debate	0.0	4.5	0.0	4.5	0.0	90.9
to interpret	13.6	13.6	9.1	9.1	9.1	45.5
other (please specify)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
to instruct	0.0	4.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	95.5
to play with language	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	9.1	90.9
to explore	4.5	4.5	0.0	4.5	9.1	77.3
to discover	9.1	0.0	0.0	13.6	0.0	77.3
to clarify	0.0	9.1	9.1	9.1	9.1	63.6
to organize	0.0	4.5	13.6	4.5	4.5	72.7
to learn	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	77.3

6. In order of frequency (1= most frequent, etc.) indicate the most common **sources** of topics for your students' writing:

	Frequency 1	2	3	4	5	NR
audio visual material	0.0%	22.7%	40.9%	9.1%	4.5%	22.7%
exposure to community (field trips, etc.)	0.0	0.0	9.1	13.6	31.8	45.5
topics in other school subjects	0.0	0.0	27.3	27.3	9.1	36.4
in response to literature	77.3	13.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	9.1
students' personal experience	13.6	54.5	13.6	4.5	4.5	9.1

7. How frequently do your students address the following **audiences** in their writing?

1 = never
2 = a few times a year
3 = one to three times a month
4 = one or more times a week

	1	2	3	4	N/R
a. Self.	13.6%	45.5%	22.7%	9.1%	9.1%
b. Peers	0.0%	40.9%	36.4%	18.2%	4.5%
c. Teacher (as trusted adult).	0.0%	9.1%	45.5%	36.4%	9.1%
d. Parents	40.9%	31.8%	4.5%	0.0%	22.7%
e. Public.	9.1%	54.5%	13.6%	9.1%	13.6%
f. Other (please specify). . .	0.0%	0.0%	13.6%	0.0%	86.4%

8. How frequently do the following occur in your classroom **(use the scale from question 7)**?

	1	2	3	4	N/R
a. individual student-teacher conferences	0.0%	59.1%	31.8%	4.5%	4.5%
b. group student-teacher conferences	0.0%	45.5%	36.4%	13.6%	4.5%
c. students conferencing with each other.	4.5%	13.6%	68.2%	9.1%	4.5%

9. How frequently do your students engage in the following (**use the scale from question 7**)?

	1	2	3	4	N/R
a. Drafting.	4.5%	22.7%	68.2%	0.0%	4.5%
b. Revising.	0.0%	13.6%	77.3%	4.5%	4.5%
c. Editing	0.0%	22.7%	72.7%	0.0%	4.5%
d. Rewriting for publication .	36.4%	27.3%	27.3%	0.0%	9.1%
e. Proofreading.	0.0%	27.3%	63.6%	0.0%	9.1%
f. Sharing with others	0.0%	31.8%	45.5%	13.6%	9.1%

10. In what proportion of writing assignments do students prepare one or more drafts in addition to the final copy? **Please circle the closest number.**

0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%	NR
0.0%	9.1%	13.6%	0.0%	0.0%	9.1%	9.1%	9.1%	22.7%	13.6%	9.1%	4.5%

11. **How** are students' final products shared with others? **(Check all those that occur at least several times a year)**:

27.3% put on class bulletin board

9.1% put on school (e.g., library) bulletin board

9.1% placed in school library

27.3% published in school newspaper

4.5% published in community newspaper

9.1% read or presented to a group

4.5% other (please specify)

12. Do language arts teachers and other subject teachers in your school ever meet to plan writing across the curriculum? 40.9% YES 59.1% NO

If yes, how frequently do you meet? **Check one.**

27.3% once or twice a year

4.5% 3 - 5 times a year

9.1% 6 or more times a year.

59.1% NR

13. Do your students use Writing Folders? 45.5% YES 45.5% NO 9.1% NR

If yes, briefly describe how the use of the folder reflects the phases of the writing process itself.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS WRITING ASSESSMENT 1988

TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE IMMERSION 200

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect information regarding classroom practices in writing instruction. The data collected will be used to help interpret the results of the student testing.

1. Indicate below **all** grades and levels at which you teach English language arts (**check all that apply**):

0.0% grade 1
0.0% grade 2
0.0% grade 3
0.0% grade 4
0.0% grade 5

0.0% grade 6
0.0% grade 7
0.0% grade 8
7.1% grade 9
78.6% English/anglais 100

100.0% English/anglais 101
0.0% English/anglais 200
28.6% English/anglais 201
50.0% English/anglais 300
14.3% English/anglais 301

NOTE: Please be sure to answer all subsequent questions in terms of your grade/level Immersion 200 program. (Sample size = 14)

2. Please circle the appropriate number to indicate the frequency with which you use any of the following pre-writing activities:

1 = never 2 = a few times a year 3 = one to three times a month
4 = one or more times a week

	1	2	3	4	N/R
a. Talking	7.1%	0.0%	35.7%	57.1%	0.0%
b. Interviewing	14.3%	64.3%	14.3%	0.0%	7.1%
c. Brainstorming	0.0%	21.4%	42.9%	35.7%	0.0%
d. Drama	7.1%	50.0%	28.6%	7.1%	7.1%
e. Viewing	7.1%	35.7%	42.9%	7.1%	7.1%
f. Listening	7.1%	14.3%	42.9%	28.6%	7.1%
g. Sensory Activities	35.7%	28.6%	14.3%	7.1%	14.3%
h. Mental Exercises (Imaging)	28.6%	28.6%	21.4%	7.1%	14.3%
i. Free Writing	7.1%	28.6%	28.6%	21.4%	14.3%
j. Writing Leads	7.1%	28.6%	50.0%	0.0%	14.3%
k. Drawing	50.0%	28.6%	7.1%	0.0%	14.3%
l. Outlining	0.0%	28.6%	50.0%	14.3%	7.1%
m. Clustering/Mapping	28.6%	35.7%	7.1%	7.1%	21.4%
n. Listing	7.1%	42.9%	28.6%	14.3%	7.1%

3. What pre-writing strategies do you typically observe your students using on their own? **(check all that apply)**

64.3%	posing questions to be explored
7.1%	drawing pictures/diagrams
92.9%	jotting notes (words, phrases, ideas)
64.3%	priorizing
92.9%	outlining
14.3%	webbing
57.1%	categorizing
7.1%	mapping
42.9%	rehearsing
7.1%	other (please specify):

4. In order of frequency (1= most frequent, 2= second most frequent, etc.) please indicate how writing topics are generated for your students.

	Frequency				
	1	2	3	4	NR
assigned by teacher	28.6%	28.6%	35.7%	0.0%	7.1%
students choose from a list of possible topics	57.1%	28.6%	7.1%	0.0%	7.1%
created by student	7.1%	35.7%	42.9%	0.0%	14.3%
other (please specify)	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%

5. In order of frequency (1= most frequent, etc.) please indicate the five most common **purposes** for which your students write:

Frequency

	1	2	3	4	5	NR
to explain	35.7%	14.3%	0.0%	14.3%	0.0%	35.7%
to persuade	14.3	7.1	14.3	7.1	0.0	57.1
to entertain	0.0	7.1	14.3	0.0	14.3	64.3
to inform	0.0	7.1	7.1	7.1	7.1	71.4
to describe	0.0	0.0	7.1	7.1	7.1	78.6
to debate	0.0	7.1	0.0	7.1	0.0	85.7
to interpret	14.3	21.4	14.3	7.1	14.3	28.6
other (please specify)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
to instruct	0.0	7.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	92.9
to play with language	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.1	92.9
to explore	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.1	14.3	78.6
to discover	14.3	0.0	0.0	7.1	0.0	78.6
to clarify	0.0	7.1	14.3	14.3	7.1	57.1
to organize	0.0	0.0	14.3	7.1	7.1	71.4
to learn	7.1	7.1	0.0	0.0	7.1	78.6

6. In order of frequency (1= most frequent, etc.) indicate the most common **sources** of topics for your students' writing:

Frequency

	1	2	3	4	5	NR
audio visual material	0.0%	35.7%	28.6%	7.1%	7.1%	21.4%
exposure to community (field trips, etc.)	0.0	0.0	14.3	21.4	14.3	50.0
topics in other school subjects	0.0	0.0	28.6	14.3	14.3	42.9
in response to literature	78.6	14.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.1
students' personal experience	14.3	42.9	21.4	7.1	7.1	7.1

7. How frequently do your students address the following **audiences** in their writing?

1 = never
2 = a few times a year
3 = one to three times a month
4 = one or more times a week

		1	2	3	4	N/R
a.	Self.	14.3%	35.7%	28.6%	7.1%	14.3%
b.	Peers	0.0%	28.6%	42.9%	21.4%	7.1%
c.	Teacher (as trusted adult).	0.0%	14.3%	42.9%	28.6%	14.3%
d.	Parents	35.7%	28.6%	7.1%	0.0%	28.6%
e.	Public.	14.3%	42.9%	21.4%	7.1%	14.3%
f.	Other (please specify). . .	0.0%	0.0%	14.3%	0.0%	85.7%

8. How frequently do the following occur in your classroom **(use the scale from question 7)**?

		1	2	3	4	N/R
a.	individual student-teacher conferences	0.0%	64.3%	21.4%	7.1%	7.1%
b.	group student-teacher conferences	0.0%	35.7%	35.7%	21.4%	7.1%
c.	students conferencing with each other.	0.0%	0.0%	78.6%	14.3%	7.1%

9. How frequently do your students engage in the following (**use the scale from question 7**)?

		1	2	3	4	N/R
a.	Drafting.	0.0%	28.6%	64.3%	0.0%	7.1%
b.	Revising.	0.0%	7.1%	78.6%	7.1%	7.1%
c.	Editing	0.0%	14.3%	78.6%	0.0%	7.1%
d.	Rewriting for publication .	21.4%	28.6%	35.7%	0.0%	14.3%
e.	Proofreading.	0.0%	14.3%	71.4%	0.0%	14.3%
f.	Sharing with others	0.0%	14.3%	50.0%	21.4%	14.3%

10. In what proportion of writing assignments do students prepare one or more drafts in addition to the final copy? **Please circle the closest number.**

0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%	NR
0.0%	0.0%	14.3%	0.0%	0.0%	14.3%	14.3%	0.0%	14.3%	21.4%	14.3%	7.1%

11. **How** are students' final products shared with others? (**Check all those that occur at least several times a year**):

21.4%	put on class bulletin board
7.1%	put on school (e.g., library) bulletin board
14.3%	placed in school library
28.6%	published in school newspaper
7.1%	published in community newspaper
85.7%	read or presented to a group
7.1%	other (please specify)____________________

12. Do language arts teachers and other subject teachers in your school ever meet to plan writing across the curriculum? 42.9% YES 57.1% NO

If yes, how frequently do you meet? **Check one.**

21.4%	once or twice a year
7.1%	3 - 5 times a year
14.3%	6 or more times a year.
57.1%	NR

13. Do your students use Writing Folders? 35.7% YES 57.1% NO 7.1% NR

If yes, briefly describe how the use of the folder reflects the phases of the writing process itself.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS WRITING ASSESSMENT 1988

TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE IMMERSION 201

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect information regarding classroom practices in writing instruction. The data collected will be used to help interpret the results of the student testing.

1. Indicate below **all** grades and levels at which you teach English language arts (**check all that apply**):

0.0%	grade 1	0.0%	grade 6	37.5%	English/anglais 101
0.0%	grade 2	0.0%	grade 7	25.0%	English/anglais 200
0.0%	grade 3	0.0%	grade 8	0.0%	English/anglais 201
0.0%	grade 4	12.5%	grade 9	37.5%	English/anglais 300
0.0%	grade 5	25.0%	English/anglais 100	25.0%	English/anglais 301

NOTE: Please be sure to answer all subsequent questions in terms of your grade/level Immersion 201 program. (Sample size = 8)

2. Please circle the appropriate number to indicate the frequency with which you use any of the following pre-writing activities:

1 = never 2 = a few times a year 3 = one to three times a month 4 = one or more times a week

		1	2	3	4	N/R
a.	Talking	0.0%	12.5%	25.0%	62.5%	0.0%
b.	Interviewing	12.5%	75.0%	12.5%	0.0%	0.0%
c.	Brainstorming	0.0%	25.0%	50.0%	12.5%	12.5%
d.	Drama	50.0%	12.5%	25.0%	12.5%	0.0%
e.	Viewing	0.0%	75.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
f.	Listening	0.0%	37.5%	37.5%	25.0%	0.0%
g.	Sensory Activities	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
h.	Mental Exercises (Imaging).	12.5%	87.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
i.	Free Writing	0.0%	25.0%	25.0%	50.0%	0.0%
j.	Writing Leads	37.5%	25.0%	25.0%	0.0%	12.5%
k.	Drawing	25.0%	62.5%	0.0%	0.0%	12.5%
l.	Outlining	0.0%	37.5%	50.0%	12.5%	0.0%
m.	Clustering/Mapping	62.5%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%	12.5%
n.	Listing	0.0%	62.5%	37.5%	0.0%	0.0%

3. What pre-writing strategies do you typically observe your students using on their own? (**check all that apply**)

62.5% posing questions to be explored
25.0% drawing pictures/diagrams
87.5% jotting notes (words, phrases, ideas)
50.0% priorizing
100.0% outlining
0.0% webbing
62.5% categorizing
0.0% mapping
12.5% rehearsing
0.0% other (please specify): ______________________

4. In order of frequency (1= most frequent, 2= second most frequent, etc.) please indicate how writing topics are generated for your students.

	Frequency				
	1	2	3	4	NR
assigned by teacher	50.0%	37.5%	12.5%	0.0%	0.0%
students choose from a list of possible topics	50.0%	37.5%	12.5%	0.0%	0.0%
created by student	0.0%	12.5%	62.5%	12.5%	12.5%
other (please specify)	0.0%	12.5%	0.0%	0.0%	87.5%

5. In order of frequency (1= most frequent, etc.) please indicate the five most common **purposes** for which your students write:

	Frequency					
	1	2	3	4	5	NR
to explain	25.0%	12.5%	25.0%	0.0%	12.5%	25.0%
to persuade	0.0	25.0	12.5	25.0	0.0	37.5
to entertain	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	37.5	62.5
to inform	25.0	12.5	12.5	0.0	0.0	50.0
to describe	12.5	0.0	12.5	12.5	12.5	50.0
to debate	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
to interpret	12.5	0.0	0.0	12.5	0.0	75.0
other (please specify)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
to instruct	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
to play with language	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	12.5	87.5
to explore	12.5	12.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	75.0
to discover	0.0	0.0	0.0	25.0	0.0	75.0
to clarify	0.0	12.5	0.0	0.0	12.5	75.0
to organize	0.0	12.5	12.5	0.0	0.0	75.0
to learn	0.0	0.0	12.5	12.5	0.0	75.0

6. In order of frequency (1= most frequent, etc.) indicate the most common **sources** of topics for your students' writing:

	Frequency					
	1	2	3	4	5	NR
audio visual material	0.0%	0.0%	62.5%	12.5%	0.0%	25.0%
exposure to community (field trips, etc.)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	62.5	37.5
topics in other school subjects	0.0	0.0	25.0	50.0	0.0	25.0
in response to literature	75.0	12.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	12.5
students' personal experience	12.5	75.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	12.5

7. How frequently do your students address the following **audiences** in their writing?

1 = never
2 = a few times a year
3 = one to three times a month
4 = one or more times a week

		1	2	3	4	N/R
a.	Self.	12.5%	62.5%	12.5%	12.5%	0.0%
b.	Peers	0.0%	62.5%	25.0%	12.5%	0.0%
c.	Teacher (as trusted adult).	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%
d.	Parents	50.0%	37.5%	0.0%	0.0%	12.5%
e.	Public.	0.0%	75.0%	0.0%	12.5%	12.5%
f.	Other (please specify). . .	0.0%	0.0%	12.5%	0.0%	87.5%

8. How frequently do the following occur in your classroom **(use the scale from question 7)**?

		1	2	3	4	N/R
a.	individual student-teacher conferences	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%
b.	group student-teacher conferences	0.0%	62.5%	37.5%	0.0%	0.0%
c.	students conferencing with each other.	12.5%	37.5%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%

9. How frequently do your students engage in the following (**use the scale from question 7**)?

		1	2	3	4	N/R
a.	Drafting.	12.5%	12.5%	75.0%	0.0%	0.0%
b.	Revising.	0.0%	25.0%	75.0%	0.0%	0.0%
c.	Editing	0.0%	37.5%	62.5%	0.0%	0.0%
d.	Rewriting for publication .	62.5%	25.0%	12.5%	0.0%	0.0%
e.	Proofreading.	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%
f.	Sharing with others	0.0%	62.5%	37.5%	0.0%	0.0%

10. In what proportion of writing assignments do students prepare one or more drafts in addition to the final copy? **Please circle the closest number.**

0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%	NR
0.0%	25.0%	12.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	25.0%	37.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

11. **How** are students' final products shared with others? (**Check all those that occur at least several times a year**):

62.5%	put on class bulletin board
87.5%	put on school (e.g., library) bulletin board
0.0%	placed in school library
25.0%	published in school newspaper
0.0%	published in community newspaper
100.0%	read or presented to a group
0.0%	other (please specify)____________________

12. Do language arts teachers and other subject teachers in your school ever meet to plan writing across the curriculum? 37.5% YES 62.5% NO

If yes, how frequently do you meet? **Check one.**

37.5%	once or twice a year
0.0%	3 - 5 times a year
0.0%	6 or more times a year.
62.5%	NR

13. Do your students use Writing Folders? 62.5% YES 25.0% NO 12.5 NR

If yes, briefly describe how the use of the folder reflects the phases of the writing process itself.